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Governing the Knowledge Economy: the World Bank as a Gatekeeper for Development

Glyn Everett

A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in the Faculty of Social Sciences. Department of Sociology, March 2004.

Eighty-one thousand, three-hundred and forty-eight words

Abstract

This thesis is concerned with the changing shape of 'knowledge', 'development' and global institutions of social and economic governance, within the context of changes in discursive practices surrounding the notion of our entering a 'knowledge economy'. The work approaches these changes as being relatively new variations upon a number of older struggles around sources and understandings of property and wealth, the means by which they are produced, and the means by which claims upon them are made. The focus within this approach is consequently upon how trends of *repetition* predominate within the *re*-production of dominant sets of discursive practices, but how at the same time within each such moment of reproduction new and different spaces can potentially open up, and new contributions potentially be heard, opening up possibilities for the production of *differences*.

The substantial focus of the study is provided by the World Bank's engagement with knowledge economy discourse through a major rhetorical shift in its self-image in 1995 when it became, officially, the Knowledge Bank. The Bank is argued to have been existing in a state of crisis for some years, with calls for its reform or abolition, and its own self-administered programmes of reform and renewal, being equally frequent and fervent in their advertised intentions of radically changing or shutting down the organisation. The Bank is approached as a great story-teller playing a number of roles *within* and housing a range of perspectives *upon* what development is and can be. Yet the organisation is argued to be made both less useful and more dangerous through an organisational preoccupation with normalising discursive practices around its one officially-approved vision of development. Later chapters consider how engagement with the organisation's reproduction as a Knowledge Bank could potentially be used in opening it up to other voices and other understandings.

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Author's declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the Regulations of the University of Bristol. The work is original except where indicated by special reference in the text and no part of the dissertation has been submitted for any other degree.

Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author and in no way represent those of the University of Bristol.

The dissertation has not been presented to any other University for examination either in the United Kingdom or overseas.

SIGNED:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'C. L. G.' followed by a long horizontal flourish.

DATE: 17/09/2004

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Introduction

'A good story keeps on growing. A good story never dies... Stories are the wisest surviving parts of a people's stupidities or failings.' (Ben Okri, *Birds of Heaven*, 1996: 32)

'[D]evelopment is a tough and complicated business. After 50 years of operation, and with new leadership, it is a good time for the Bank Group to take stock. The world around us has changed, and its expectations from, and demands on, our institution have become ever more complex. I regard this as a difficult period, but one of enormous opportunity.' (James Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank, *1995 Annual Meetings Speech*)

In its broadest sense this thesis is concerned with the changing shape of 'knowledge', 'development' and global institutions of social and economic governance within the context of discourse upon the 'knowledge economy'. The study's substantial focus is provided by the World Bank, the world's largest development body, in its engagement with this discourse through the major rhetorical shift in its self-image in 1995 when it became, officially, the Knowledge Bank. The World Bank is a great story-teller of our age. However many amongst its audience are unhappy with the stories they hear, or find it hard to resolve these stories with the realities they see around them. The Bank has been seen as existing in a state of crisis for some years, with calls for its reform or abolition being frequent from many within its audience, and programmes of reform and renewal being initiated by every new leader who takes the helm of the organisation. The Bank's fiftieth birthday in 1994 was reason for a huge number of performance assessments, including the Bank's own two-volume critical self-reflection (Kapur et al. 1997a, 1997b) and a global campaign by a broad coalition of critical organisations based on the call of '*Fifty Years is Enough!*' (see for instance www.50years.org). Again some critics called for its abolition whilst others petitioned for reforms, and again both camps included those concerned with its existence as a 'bank' with an interest in protecting capital interests, as well as those concerned with its role as a 'development organisation' and its perceived failures in this regard.

One year later a new President, James Wolfensohn, took over the Bank and in turn a new programme of renewal emerged, this time picking up on trends in contemporary social science discourse concerning the social and economic importance of knowledge and information. The organisation now declared that it was to become a

'Knowledge Bank', engaging knowledge *for* development and in the process enabling development (and thereby producing returns upon capital investments) more effectively than it had done before. There would be a New Bank that was ready to make sure that all the world's peoples were able to benefit from the world's New (Knowledge) Economy. Through a rhetorical turn towards the notion of our entering a 'knowledge economy' (and the correlating constitution of 'knowledge societies'), the World Bank has thus attempted to reposition itself on the development landscape as a premier knowledge manager. The Bank is considered both in terms of how it has contributed to and helped to shape, as well as how it has reacted to and been influenced by, this moment of overlap. Critics have denounced both the knowledge economy and the Knowledge Bank as the imperialistic machinations of Northern capital interests extending their remit of control, whilst advocates have celebrated what they see as overdue, necessary, and promising developments. This thesis accepts many criticisms that have been made but draws back from many more fatalistic pronouncements that have consequently been passed. It seeks instead to assess the situation in its full complexity, and consider how the changes under analysis might be engaged with in developing the slim avenues of opportunity that are argued to exist within them.

Several themes run through the work and guide the approach adopted here. Firstly there is the matter of repetition, difference, and incremental underdetermined changes. In thinking about the economic and social innovations described under the banners of the *knowledge economy* and *society*, and the new policy directions undertaken by the Bank and others, the impression is that we are seeing largely a new game played by the same rules. Chapter One outlines important tools as well as points upon methodology and terminology, and draws a central distinction on an institutional economic understanding between organisations and institutions. Understanding institutions as the rules by which society functions, organisations can be seen as adapting to new concerns around the importance of knowledge within an as yet largely unchanged institutional context. Organisational changes may produce adaptations in social institutions, but over the longer term and under the effect of a wider range of influences. Hence what we currently see are changes much on the basis of a *repetition* with some more and less significant differences. This highlights the need to deflate the rhetoric of change that surrounds knowledge economy and

society discourses in order to assess what is actually happening, emphasising that the changes occurring are often overstated and do not necessarily cohere in the manner discussed. A related element within this theme is the importance of the *performance* of discursive changes. Drama is here used as a metaphoric model for thinking about discursive reproduction, repetition, and difference. The metaphor emphasises the work's focus upon the public rhetorical and discursive performance of the Bank, and so acts as a caution against reductive empiricism in the analysis of characters and events. It also brings forth a range of performative typologies, posing questions in thinking about who scripts these dramas and defines the actor positions therein, and who directs, prompts and sets the stage.

The second main theme is of a discourse of reform that circulates around, within, and through the World Bank. It is stressed that the Bank may be a big player in a multitude of relatively smaller situations around the world, but is itself a relatively small player in several larger ones, a conclusion indicated by the discussion of organisations and institutions and elaborated in the consideration of knowledge and development discourses in Chapters Two through to Four. Chapter Two considers theoretical explorations of the knowledge economy and society ideas. Points of emergence of four discursive streams are noted around perceived changes in knowledge and information production, and technological developments that have inspired thinking about the 'network' as an effective mode of organisation. The dominant trend is observed to focus upon the potential for socio-economic liberation and the demise of exploitation through the evolution of new social and economic forms. Problems of conceptualisation and measurement are then outlined in arguing that the changes observed are often imbued with more significance and optimism than they merit. A restricted understanding of the knowledge economy is accepted as a potentially useful framework through which to approach certain contemporary socio-technical changes, but a more critical and sceptical perspective towards the notion is argued to be necessary in seeking to avoid complacency.

Chapter Three then considers how these trends are being performed as a mode of governmental discursive practice. Government institutions are argued to play a central role in shaping the construction and performance of any 'new economy' as a socio-economic reality, establishing legal infrastructures and heightening awareness of the changes under analysis. The role of international knowledge structures in

determining whose knowledge 'counts', and likely consequent winning and losing positions in the new economy, are also considered. Again optimism is noted to run unguardedly strong in the notion of 'leapfrogging'. Finally, an alternative conception of the knowledge economy is briefly considered in terms of certain advantages it could potentially offer with regard to development over the dominant forms of discursive practice outlined here, and for its potential to effect changes in the dominant discourse. Chapter Four then provides a summary of the state of development discourse, illustrating how 'poverty' is produced through statistical commodification exercises in articulating a problem that helps to define a project through which it can be engaged. It is noted that development as a grand-scale (governmental, industrial) project has been continually modified in response to its perceived failings by the standards which the discourse itself produces. New concerns (participation, environment, women) have been appended and the roles of various actors adjusted (including allowing a greater part for the state in regulating the economy and providing public goods). Yet the narrative's core objectives and dynamics have remained in many ways the same. These three chapters emphasise how the Bank is merely one player upon several discursive terrains. Chapter Five then considers the Knowledge Bank programme as a belated reaction to changes ongoing in the discourses it occupies, and knowledge economy discourse itself is observed to be several conversations within the Bank, with contributions from various perspectives. The Knowledge Bank programme functions firstly as a focus for reorganisation, seeking to apply 'networked' modes of organisation to the Bank, to decentralise and partner in producing a Knowledge Management and Networking Bank. It secondly functions in emphasising the importance of the Bank's work to *all* development efforts through problematising the positions of other actors and situating a Knowledge for Development Bank as being central their achieving their objectives.

In thinking of the Bank as an organisation which is both big and a small in various situations, and within which discussions continue that are similar in nature to those that surround it, the question of reform or abolishment appears as an interesting question unproductively posed at the wrong level. The question relates ultimately to how we might alter the current institutions of capital regulation so as to more effectively ensure the provision of scarce resources to peoples according to their needs, and within that questions of how needs are to be fairly defined. Many who

want to abolish the Bank are aware of the need for some forms of global organisations to act as rule-setters and regulators of international trade, investment and capital flows. The question can then be reframed as one of gauging the potentiality for, and openness to, adaptation within the Bank and its arrangements of clients and governors. That is, the discourse of reform that surrounds, and persists within, the organisation. The third strong theme within this work, then, considers the politics of networks which runs through the discourses considered and the changes undertaken at the Bank through its Renewal. A network mentality is becoming normalised within the Bank. Through knowledge economy discourse the 'network' has gained credibility as a mode of social and economic organisation, and thereby as a unit of activity and means of analysis. Throughout the work it is argued that the distinction often drawn between hierarchical (bureaucratic) and horizontalised (network) modes of organisation is inadequate insofar as it is overly optimistic and reductively dichotomous. Drawing upon the work of Michel Callon, Bruno Latour and others it is argued that networks need to be thought of as forging connections through processes of translation rather than the unmediated transfer of flows (of goods, capital, people, information and so forth).

Chapter Six observes that the Knowledge Bank is not a specific programme or agenda but more of an ethos or oeuvre of Renewal, an idea deployed within a mushrooming of relatively autonomous initiatives being painted in its colours, and an exercise in increasing organisational self-awareness and redefining the dominant understanding of the Bank. A changing mode of discursive engagement is becoming manifest through the Knowledge Management and Networking Bank, and so new forms of practice and a potentially *somewhat* new Bank. Through the discourse of decentralisation and partnership the organisation becomes potentially more dispersed and open to influence. The politics of networks is considered through the Bank's attempts to reconceive itself, and the development community as a whole, as a series of horizontalised networks, and the degree to which relations of power are and are not flattened through the reproduction of certain nodes as gateway points exerting a dominant influence over the shape and direction of the network's constitutive flows. Chapter Seven considers the normalising effects of such 'networked' discursive practices. These help to shape the unfolding of a discursive trend through the production of communities or networks wherein the Bank is reproduced as a gateway

node, a more central point of connection between other agents as well as a producer and manager of development knowledge and the means and standards of development knowledge production. Aspects of the potentially enabling and constraining effects of such normalisation are explored with regard to a dominant Bank understanding of 'knowledge for development' and related conceptions of development and governance at a distance. A study of one Bank initiative, the Development Gateway, and the interaction between the Bank and certain of its critics around this endeavour, indicates how the organisation's discourse of decentralisation and partnership is restricted through its tendency to retain hold of core operations, but also how this discourse provides tools for critical development organisations to push the Bank further in its discursive *practice*.

The concluding Chapter Eight then looks at the discourse of Bank reform from the perspective of critical organisations and strategies of resistance. Resistance is framed as necessary insofar as the organisation is changing, but is still dominated by the interests of its Northern government members. Change is happening, but it is slow, and so resistance could encourage, and shape the direction of, more difference within its repetition, more reform within its discourse. It is argued that the multiplicity of perspectives within the Bank harbour small openings onto other ways of being and of 'developing' economically. What is required is the further development of trans-Bank critical networks that strengthen resistance to the organisation's dominant economic voice both inside and outside of it. Rather than dismiss the Bank as a tool of US imperialism that needs to be abolished, therefore, it can be engaged with through carefully encouraging its own discursive practices, drawing the organisation out from the cover of its central Washington hub. The aim would be to pursue decentralisation to the degree where local organisations could exert more influence over Bank country-bases which would increasingly become the hubs of Bank policy. If the Bank could be diffused through decentralisation, this might help defuse the economic and intellectual might with which it dominates the development landscape.

The questions that dominate this work are therefore concerned with how 'discourse can be both an instrument and an effect of power, but also a hindrance, a stumbling-block, a point of resistance and a starting point for an opposing strategy' (Foucault 1990: 101). As will be addressed throughout this thesis, some fifty years after the Bank's establishment it is still an organisation dreaming of its ultimate goal (of a world

free of poverty). The new economic discourse and the discourses of reform and renewal that surround the Bank present an opportunity to encourage changes in how the organisation pursues this goal and the institutional context within which it does so.

This thesis is thus designed with the intention of encouraging shifts in the way all those who engage with the Bank think about what the organisation is and what it could become, and the means available for engaging with it in order to produce changes in its modes and means of operations. It is therefore similarly concerned with overcoming the apparent opposition between the two groups of those who wish to reform the Bank and those who wish to abolish it. Seeing the Bank in the context that will be outlined here allows us to situate 'it' as a space within a series of assemblages of resources (people, capital, knowledge and so forth); an organisational entity through which various assemblages are defined and redefined, strengthened and weakened, and which is in turn affected by the activities *of* and other influences *upon* that which is assembled. This raises the question of how clearly demarcated the space which defines the Bank *is*, and *needs* to be, for the various purposes of those who engage with it. This thesis contends that one productive strategy of engagement with the Bank would use its discourse of decentralisation and partnering to encourage further adaptations in its discursive practices such as greater engagement with external partners and initiatives and the restriction of Bank involvement wherever possible to promote more deliberative and collaborative processes of problem-definition and agenda-setting. Such changes could also blur the lines of the space demarcating the Bank, enabling greater and more productive interaction between those within and without the Bank eager to encourage changes in its discursive practices.

PART ONE:

**The Discursive Apparatuses of the Knowledge Economy
and Development**

Of Cyberspace, Public Performance, and Research-at-a-Distance

Introduction

This opening chapter maps out the terrain the thesis will cover. The conceptual tools and the broad methodological approach of the work are laid out, and a number of terminological issues are clarified in outlining the relation adopted towards the discourses considered. This work considers the politics of and within specific networks as well as the politics of thinking in network terms, and so a critical understanding of the 'network' is outlined here. It is noted that network thinking needs to be engaged with carefully and critically, given the ease with which the term can be deployed in an overly simplistic, optimistic and reductive fashion to imply the horizontalisation of structures of power and the unimpeded flow of network content between nodes (goods, capital, information, people and so forth). The network is nonetheless argued to be one useful, if necessarily limited, way of understanding certain modes of organisation, as well as the manner in which flows can be structured and channelled, enabled, restricted and transformed.

The tendency towards thinking of networks as open spaces of free and equal connections is argued to be an unproductive outcome of the rise to dominance of a network model based around an idealised vision of the Internet. This model weakens critical thinking upon the processes of translation involved in establishing and maintaining connections and flows between 'nodes' within 'networks', and the agency involved in *producing* identifiable and distinct 'nodes' and 'networks'. One aspect of this is the analytical elision of both qualitative differences between flows and the prevalence of hierarchies or clusters at points within networks. Some indication of the flaws within such thinking is given in a brief critical analysis of the Internet as a precursor to later engagement with discourse upon the knowledge economy. Finally, the nature of the research conducted herein is considered and the use of the Internet as my primary research tool is explained as being a way to engage with the Bank's public rhetorical face and its efforts to reproduce and shape a space for itself within the worlds of development and governance.

Methodological and Terminological Considerations

It is worth articulating here a set of concise and functional definitions for a number of conceptual tools which will be used in this thesis. The purpose is not to 'black-box' (Latour 1987: 41-44) a theoretical stance but rather to provisionally mark out a position that enables full consideration of the outlined changes and is responsive to the potentially different eventualities stemming from these. Power and knowledge, discourse, and hegemony are all important structuring devices deployed within the text, whilst the notions of problematisation and translation (Callon 1986: 197-204) work as lenses through which discursive shifts are viewed. This work firstly focuses upon the World Bank's 'discursive practice' or discourse in practice (Fairclough 1992), those public statements situated between the discursive minutiae of its masses of textual production and its practice of granting loans, commissioning projects conceived as 'developmental', and producing 'development knowledge'. It is a study considering the performative effects of the Bank's semiotic practices, understanding semiosis as the realm of the intersubjective production of meaning, and discourse as including material practices not reducible to the semiotic alone (Fairclough et al. 2001, cf. Laclau & Mouffe 2001: 107-9). It is a study furthermore considering how the repetition of key terms and phrases, and their issuing from certain positions within a discursive frame, can naturalise understandings of the objects and subjects of discourse (actor groupings and positions, modes and dynamics of interaction, and prioritisation of concerns), and thereby concretise meaning and consolidate specific forms of interpretation.

Utterances practise a form of representation, and effect action through the discursive interaction of social actors, producing material effects beyond the statement or text. This means that the utterance can function as a political practice working to reproduce or disturb idea-sets and so re-establish and consolidate, or delegitimize and undermine, relations of power such that 'acceptable' differences in perspective come to exist primarily as variations within a normalised framework of understanding (cf. Fairclough 1992). Through the changes considered here can be seen shifts in the 'discursive regime' of development, 'effects of power peculiar to the play of statements' (Foucault 1984a: 55). This power is, importantly, productive as well as restrictive, enabling new forms of developmental practice and providing a taste of

brighter futures as well as justifying the continuation and extension of practices that reproduce inequalities and deprivation. Questions consequently run through this thesis concerning the means and ends of disturbing the dominant discursive authority that the Bank produces, and the potential for integrating this practice with other forms of political confrontation.

Hegemonic practices function by producing a dominant understanding of an operative environment. Similarly, in terms of their reproduction, changes are constructed and shaped so as to encourage shared understandings of a common situation. The economy of utterances constituting hegemonic discursive practice posits new objects, new dynamics of interaction, and potential problems therein, that maintain the centrality of certain actors and institutions to the pursuit of others' interests (Gramsci 2000). This can be seen in forms of interaction where, for some moments, meaning becomes more closed around a certain language and understanding to the (partial) exclusion of alternate possibilities. A relational conception of hegemony stresses that these processes are at root contingent and inherently potentially unstable, allowing that there will always be spaces for rupture. Such hegemonic practices can be multiple, simultaneous, competing or complementary and so always unstable, producing spaces for resistance (Laclau & Mouffe 2001, cf. Williams 1977). As Foucault (1984c: 245) insists, 'there always remain the possibilities of resistance, disobedience, and oppositional groupings'.

Hegemonic relations thus exhibit a fragile and contingent openness to both maintenance and disruption through discursive practice. Discourse analysis can therefore be seen as a means of critically assessing and engaging in the power struggle between different discursive voices (Frow 1985: 193-213). The meaning of every utterance and the use to which it is put is always potentially open and multiple, and one way of conceiving resistance is as the practice of taking this 'fracturing' and using utterances in different ('counter-hegemonic') ways. Every use of discourse is a judgement on its relations to dominant forms of power and either an assent or resistance to this relation – 'all meaning is, in the fullest sense of the word, political' (Frow 1985: 206). Given this much, then 'to intervene discursively is a form of political practice' (Dant 1991: 131). How discourses become textured through their adoption and adaptation to presently dominant forms of capital formation and regulation, and the potentiality for counter-discourses to disrupt dominant practices (through

proposing alternative actor-definitions, groupings, modes of interaction and differently-prioritised concerns), are considered for their prospects of opening up spaces wherein other voices might negotiate variations upon contemporary systems of capital regulation and consider alternative futures.

There is no 'agent' of hegemonic relations and practices in the sense of a cohesive and purposive body of actors with a common agenda of domination, but then neither is their re/production 'coincidental'. The outcome is rather 'agentive' from a multiplicity of different perspectives, that of a variety of groups pursuing sufficiently compatible or complementary objectives. We might understand this as an emergent confluence of interests brought together through successful processes of 'problematization' and translation (Callon 1986: 197-204). This occurs when one group seeks to consolidate allies in its agenda by redefining problems faced by others onto its plane of reference, positioning its understanding of an issue and its proposed activities as an 'obligatory passage point' to others in the pursuit of their interests. In this way the group presents its plans as the most effective way for both to achieve their interests, producing one solution to two or more problems, and bringing other actors around to thinking and producing reality in a certain fashion. 'Hegemony' refers to the various effects that stem from, and serve to consolidate, the dominance of one particular form or mode of translation (such as the successful framing of various social, economic and political institutions through which power flows so as to maintain their perceived legitimacy), one framework of understanding within which there exists divergence sufficient but restricted enough to maintain the reproduction of the hegemonic form (Laclau & Mouffe 2001). Problematization and translation function as lenses through which the shifts in discursive practices considered here are viewed.

These considerations help to delineate the prospects and limits of this study in thinking about knowledge. It is not intended as an analysis of the discourses of development, governance and knowledge economies/societies *per se*, and nor is it primarily an assessment of the truth of the truths that the Bank produces in its discursive contributions. It is rather situated, in one sense, as an evaluation of the adequacy of particular conditions for the production of truths that the Bank seeks to establish in its attempts to supplement or even reshape various discourses. Questions upon the truth of the Bank's work need to be considered in terms of its appropriateness and applicability to the material economic realities to which it refers,

given the economically, environmentally and socially harmful effects that many of its operations have been accused of bearing out over its more than fifty years. This work is therefore not intended to remain a self-contained analysis considering the Bank's work merely as text and surrendering notions of truth and reality (cf. Billig 1987, Fairclough et al. 2001). Staking a claim to knowledge is *strategically* useful here in enabling a critical engagement with actual and future potential effects of the Bank's manoeuvres; charting continuities and disparities, commonalities and disagreements in thinking upon the Bank's role within the conjuncture of discourses, and considering how these might affect the functioning of its knowledge production and thereby its operations as a whole. That is, considering truth as a standard of judgement and a tool of criticism, a negotiated consensus of multiple intersubjective spaces that attempts to reflexively take into account the play of power between these spaces and remain aware of the social conditions of its constitution (those under which statements come to be considered as true). A great deal is said by the way in which things are said and *who* gets to say them, and it is this about the Bank's manoeuvres that is most interesting.

The Politics of Networks and the Internet

The network is another concept that is both conditionally useful as well as unavoidable within this analysis – a very popular signifier throughout all the discourses considered here, it has become a 'critical term in contemporary political and economic life' and a widely-deployed tool of social and economic analysis (Barry 2001: 84, cf. Jessop 2002, Thompson 2003, Wellman & Berkowitz 1997)¹. I will outline a few important points here concerning conceptions of networks and, relatedly, understandings of the Internet (hereafter 'the Net'), before engaging with the 'network' as a *performative* rhetorical device as much as an *actual* organisational

¹ In *Between Hierarchies and Markets*, Grahame Thompson (2003) outlines three main theories of networks in Social Network Analysis (SNA), Transaction Cost Analysis (TCA) and Actor-Network Theory (ANT), and subjects each to a rigorous critique before going on to perform an analysis of the differing logics of networks, markets and hierarchies. My intention here is to use aspects of thinking from ANT in criticising the overly simple and optimistic manner in which networks are considered in contemporary governmental and World Bank knowledge economy/society discursive practices, not to provide a critical overview and analysis of network thinking as a whole, and so the work avoids the detailed theoretical form of engagement adopted by Thompson as well as the studies of TCA and SNA researchers (for further interesting resources upon the latter, see for instance the Institute for Social Network Analysis of the Economy, <http://www.isnae.org/sna.html>, and the International Network for Social Network Analysis, <http://www.sfu.ca/~insna/>).

form in the following chapter. Firstly then, use of the term 'network' within contemporary popular discourse has been heavily influenced by what Bruno Latour (1999: 15) has called the notion of 'double-click information'. Fostered by the predominant understanding of contemporary ICTs, this involves thinking of networks as spaces of *unmediated* and *horizontalised* resource flows producing 'transport without deformation', for instance allowing parcels of information and knowledge to be reproduced intact for each user without changing their content (or the users' understanding of it or its potential applications). Such thinking characterises much of the World Bank's rhetorical and organisational turn towards becoming a Knowledge Bank, as well as the broad swathe of contemporary governmental knowledge economy discourse.

The understanding of networks existing and knowledge sharing occurring without any necessary processes of translation between participants (unmediated flows) needs to be problematised, because it leads to both domineering practices by those who talk loudest talking *for* others without caution, and an easy but ultimately useless tool of critical attack upon one who speaks *for* another and thereby produces an altered meaning. As any 'flow' passes through a 'node' within a 'network', if we are to use these terms of reference, then it will necessarily undergo some kind of qualitative change, some form of translation, as it is consumed, processed, and reproduced. Apart from passive transitional nodes in the manner of computer terminals transferring a series of 0's and 1's from one point to another, 'nodal points' are predominantly spaces of activity engaged in interpreting, translating and negotiating understandings². Because of this agency, a flow within a network might better be conceptualised as a 'series of transformations' (Latour 1999: 15). Understanding that speaking for another necessarily involves a process of translation entails an acceptance that meaning *will* be changed and an attention to the detail of *how* it does so, which can in turn produce more substantive and constructive critiques of those who speak for others.

It is furthermore important to assess the optimistic interpretation of networking as a mode of association and organisation that produces free and horizontalised spaces.

² Even with points of passive transition 'noise' can be produced as entropy occurs within the process of transferral, 0's and 1's are missed or repeated, photocopies become blurred and words confused, and so forth.

This is something often written of with reference to the Information Communications Technology (ICT) 'revolution', and the rise of the Net in particular, in hailing the dissolution of traditional organisational and informational hierarchies (Castells 2000a, 2000b) and the advent of new opportunities for 'growth, wealth-creation and prosperity' (G8 1999: 1) or else 'opportunity, empowerment and inclusion for all' (DOT Force 2001: 3). Manuel Castells (1999: 5), a prominent writer on networked modes of organisation who will be considered in more detail in Chapter Three, has elsewhere observed that a network 'may have a hierarchy, but it has no centre'. Clustered points of activity can frequently recur within networks through processes of problematisation producing points through which many other actors pass (for example languages, conceptual structures, organisations or technologies), generating effects similar to those of hierarchical forms. When this is successful the flows of resources and energies in one direction and through one particular point are increased (as well as the number of points to which that node connects and thus its perceived usefulness as a point to be connected to by others, an access point to a wider constellation of actors).

Other than as a counter to conceptualisations of power as being embodied only within established and recognised (central) institutions, Castells' distinction between hierarchies and centres is less relevant than the acknowledgement that *more* central (clustered) points of activity can occur, producing more hierarchically-elevated nodes within networks. In this work I approach networks and hierarchical, centralised structures as not-necessarily-exclusive, not-necessarily-alternative forms that can co-exist, contradict and complement each other. Something akin to the three-dimensional significance of cartographical mapping techniques might better exposit the dual functionality of these modes of analysis. Patterns of network-clustering can be sketched out whilst maintaining an awareness of the hierarchical significance of such moments of clustering, and the self-perpetuating potential of patterns of agenda-setters and agenda-users, order-givers and order-takers stemming from this. Understanding how 'nodes' can cluster into hierarchical 'peaks' producing stickiness and coagulation in the 'flows' of information and power is relevant to observations made in later chapters regarding the World Bank's tendency for producing and fostering the development of networks within which it occupies a relatively central position, and the significant discursive effects stemming from this.

Related to these points, pronouncements upon the potential of the Internet to empower and erase distance can similarly tend towards uncritical hyperbole. Distance is a subject of concern in a fashion similar to the problem of horizontality. The Internet is said in one sense to transcend distance, in that all publications intended for external viewing can be made available on the World Wide Web (hereafter 'the Web')³ and one can move between sites on opposite sides of the world with a single click. But it also maintains and actuates other experiences of distance in terms of proximity to effective access and use through barriers of technology and understanding; one has to be *empowered* to erase distance. Although the Net would appear to produce an open horizontalised space promoting cultures of transparency and ease of equal information access (the same public websites are in theory open to all those with access to the Net and the appropriate software and computer capacity⁴) there are several problems mitigating this skin-deep globalism which stress the relevance of the question Steve Jones (1999) poses – who is the audience?. It is worth making some cautionary comments here upon the matters of accessing, negotiating, and producing spaces within the Internet as an introduction to my treatment of the developmental potential of the knowledge economy in later chapters.

In technology terms the first fundamental problem is that of *having* access to an adequate computing and telecommunications technologies. Reasonably functional access can be obtained through fairly low-grade computer systems using email and text-only websites, but to suggest that the problem is non-existent because of the availability of older discount systems to poorer persons and regions risks succumbing to an 'ideology of computer cheapness' (Sterne 1999: 280) that ignores the problems therein. Compatibility and capacity problems do still limit older machines and their users. Web technologies require increasingly advanced computer technologies (such as graphics and sound capabilities), and connection speeds can further restrict

³ The Internet and the World Wide Web are too often conflated in non-technical texts upon the subject. The Net refers to the space of a network of networks allowing inter-networking between dispersed but connected computers sharing TCP/IP protocols. To make use of this space various platforms, technologies and protocols have been established such as email, Telnet, the Web and File Transfer Protocols (Berkeley UC Library 2002). As such I use the term 'Net' in thinking about the existence of and establishment of access to this space, primarily technological and telecommunications infrastructures and training in using computer systems, whilst I refer predominantly to the Web throughout this work given that my research has been based upon the Bank's Web presence.

⁴ Unless organisational or national firewalls have been erected (restrictions put in place on a server that bar access to certain destinations such as websites), although even then software developments by those committed to overcoming the firewalls mean that a technological game of cat and mouse ensues in trying to maintain the wall's effectiveness.

access both in terms of the willingness to download larger documents or web-pages, and the cost of such downloads if connection payments are on a per-minute basis (such problems can particularly affect access to real-time presentations unavailable for download, and larger downloads such as Adobe Acrobat PDF files, cf. Taylor 2001). Capacity can further limit the use of user-friendly devices. Making maximal use of older machines will often require the tech-savvy of more advanced users who perhaps already have access to more advanced equipment. Newer users will be more likely to need more user-friendly devices and interfaces to facilitate access (such as Graphic User Interfaces like the Windows system over MS-DOS), whilst these will often require higher capacity machines to operate effectively.

Secondly, having access to training in research and information management skills (such as negotiating the Web and filtering the sources of information to be found) can be as essential as getting online in the first place with regard to negotiating this new space. Some spaces online will be much easier to locate than others because of the abundance of hyperlinks provided to them and the high profile they consequently develop with those search engines (such as Google) that prioritise sites on the basis of how often they are hyperlinked on related sites. Without training many may end up hopping between the sites of powerful offline organisations that can pay for advertising and ensure they are relatively unmissable to the new user. There is a danger of forgetting that an information superhighway will be of little use to all those outside of an elite socio-economic set if little regard is taken to consider the provision of facilitating services – informational slip roads (cheaper more user-friendly computer systems), public transport (community access centres), and driving lessons (public demonstrations of the Internet's potential) (Carter 1997: 137-8).

In terms of negotiating and understanding online sources, language is another important issue. The dominance of the English language on the Web has historically been structurally embedded through the use of particular programming codes⁵, as well as the user profile having been predominantly English-speaking (Jones 1999, cf. Jordan 1999, Mitra & Cohen 1999, Loader 1997, World Bank 1998a: 63, CNN 2000).

⁵ Older versions of HTML, the main web-programming language, used coding systems using 128 (ASCII) and then 256 (ISO-Latin) characters, and which could consequently only represent firstly English and then Western European languages. HTML 4.0 now attempts to incorporate a coding (Unicode) which allows for around 65,000 characters and so for representation of many more of the world's languages (WDG 1998).

Many attempts exist to map out the changing composition of (numbers of web-sites) and participation in (numbers of users) this area of cyberspace⁶, and both would appear to be continually expanding in terms of the presence and density of different cultural groups and languages online, such that English may now be estimated or argued to no longer be the majority Web-user language (Pastore 1999, Global Reach 2003)⁷. Yet nonetheless, English-speaking industrialised country residents still retain greatest access to and influence over shaping the Internet and the Web's profile in terms of structure and content⁸. This historical dominance could lend a trajectory (or momentum, or stickiness) to their development through the perceived value of learning and using English as an international second language for programmers and site-developers (and furthermore gaining access to the proliferation of English-based programming educational and training literature and institutions), much in parallel to the use of English in the offline world. We might not go so far as Schiller (1995) who speaks somewhat reductively of US-led attempts at a colonial initiative to establish a 'Global Information Infrastructure' which would work to homogenise global culture, but we can certainly say that the Internet is still currently dominated by the aforementioned global sub-group and so the conceptual-linguistic structuring for programmers, content-providers and users exhibits this cultural inheritance. Such cultural barriers could be as or more important than economic barriers in inhibiting or tailoring the effective widespread use of cyberspace (Jordan 1999: 46, 91, cf. Sosnoski 1999).

With regard thirdly to the matter of empowerment and producing and reproducing the Net (and the Web), beyond the argument that the openness of a set of signifiers leaves any text (hard-copy or hyper-text) open to interpretation by the reader, it has been argued that the Web empowers readers to produce their own text, re-authoring

⁶ See for example CyberAtlas (<http://cyberatlas.internet.com>) and Global Reach (<http://www.glreach.com>).

⁷ Yet any practise of mapping a terrain will always necessarily constitute a political act – through for instance the selection of relevant criteria and choice of cartographical techniques – and with cyberspace this is especially evident with the involvement of corporate and governmental interests in shaping public impressions of the cyberspatial landscape (Dodge & Kitchin 1999).

⁸ For instance ICANN (the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, <http://www.icann.org>), which manages the Domain Name System and thereby exercises control over the creation of top-level domain names (.org, .co.uk and so forth) as well as the continuing recognition of those already established (ensuring that browsers will continue to recognise and find sites ending in .za, .fr and so on), exists as a non-profit corporation based in California. ICANN was created in 1998 after an 'international' meeting organised by the US Department of Commerce, and has been criticised for the undemocratically selected nature of its executive committee and for its being accountable only to the US Department of Commerce (ICANN Watch 2002).

the works they view through the selection and navigation of hyperlinks (Mitra & Cohen 1999). The intertextuality of the Web is said to be more explicit and immediately accessible, it being possible to embed the sources of ideas within text via a direct link to the source⁹. The reader can then author their own work by following links according to their desire for skimming, researching in-depth, or pursuing tangential thoughts. However this presents an overoptimistic reading of online information consumption, given that this 're-authoring' through negotiating hyperlinks ultimately functions only in the sense of children's 'create-your-own-adventure' books. For as long as the web-surfer only *reads* then they retain a dependence upon the site authors between whom they jump in the manner of turning a kaleidoscope to produce a new image. The reader may be placed in a slightly more agentive position, but is only ever playing with the pieces. They can perhaps produce ornate mosaics, but this is not the same as to write. The positions of the article author, and the web-site constructor who places the information online, are still more empowered.

This distinction, and its elision within more optimistic discursive contributions, is revisited later in noting how simply getting people or countries online has been hailed as a step towards empowerment in itself. My emphasis is that this wider access needs to be complemented by wider command of the tools of the Internet infra- and super-structure (telecommunication systems, web-servers and the ability to produce, maintain and regulate them, and control of regional domain names) if relationships within contemporary flows of power and knowledge are to be altered. I am interested in how the intertextual functionality of hyperlinks works in guiding users from one site to another 'related' site of the page-constructor's choice; how this enables the production of truths as assertions become embedded and accepted through persistent cross-referencing; and how different *forms* of knowledge and standards and *means* of information assessment can be prioritised or sidelined in this way¹⁰.

⁹ A word may be highlighted in a different colour indicating that it can be clicked to open up a new space where the idea is explored in more depth or a link to a related issue/site is provided.

¹⁰ Issues of hypertext-intertextuality are of lesser direct relevance to large areas of my research materials on the World Bank in themselves. Intertextuality is important for me in mapping out areas of concern within discourses of governance, development and knowledge; in these areas much of my work has been concerned with hard-copy documents and books. With regard to Bank documentation, many publications used have been put online in e-book format (Adobe Acrobat 'pdf' files), and direct transcriptions of speeches with no embedded hyperlinks. Standard understandings of intertextuality are of course still an issue here in the sense of readings referenced or intimated within the texts. More interesting and relevant are questions of where the hyperlink to documents are placed, the text and links that surround them, and where else their hyperlinks recur on the Internet. However given that

Such selective referentiality can perform in shaping and governing a discourse by mapping the terrain and the field of appropriate contributions. The World Bank's web complex, for instance, is substantially self-referential but also provides links to a wide range of initiatives it has fostered to stand as independents, and the partners thereof, giving a sense of diversity and producing a sense of a development community but excluding an equally wide range of non-partner groups.

The freedoms many presume to grow simply from the development of the Internet might thus be better approached as the latent possibilities that have to be struggled for. As Foucault reminds us, space is a central element in the construction of common forms of life and in the exercise of power. As such we need to look to how this new space produces new forms of power or reshapes older forms, considering the continuities and discontinuities with other power flows and remembering that 'liberty is a practice ... what must be exercised' (Foucault 1984c: 245-252) rather than something embedded within certain forms of interaction. We need to be careful not to become caught up in clichés of cyberspatial revolution and 'millennial imagination' (Sterne 1999: 282), transcending technophilic and technophobic approaches to the Internet and recognising how in many ways it embodies new tools for the exercise of much older forms of power-play. The Internet and the World Wide Web are dynamic spaces and both access profiles and online content are continually changing in ways that might affect the relevance of some of the comments made above. Aspects of such issues are addressed in Chapters Three and beyond in looking at the possibility of 'developing' countries 'leapfrogging' stages of industrial development to enter the 'cyber-economy'.

A Terminological Mapping

Consideration of the role and functioning of discourse emphasises the need for a reflexive engagement with the terminology used within this work. The deployment of a term can perform a politics, and several terminological choices have been important to articulating a consistent critical position within this work. A few are dealt with in

mapping the intertwining of the Bank's sites with its surroundings would be a massive (but interesting) project in itself, and that this is not my central concern, it is a matter addressed in this paper only according to its relevance to the moment in charting elements in the process of fact and story construction.

later chapters, as indicated in the chapter outlines in the Introduction; one such concerns that of the countries most commonly referred to as 'developing' or 'less-developed', a matter addressed in Chapter Four; another concerns the many choices of terms for information and knowledge economies and societies, dealt with in Chapters Two and Three. But others remain, and it is worth clarifying a few of these before moving on given that they function as framing devices for the position that is articulated through this analysis, and explain why the Bank is here referred to as an International Financial Organisation rather than the more commonly and interchangeably used referents of International Financial Institution and International Governance Organisation.

On first consideration both institution and organisation simply signify a body established for and coordinated towards the achievement of a particular purpose; however a useful distinction is elided in this light use of the terms. An institution can alternatively be defined in institutional economic terms as 'the rules of the game of a society ... the humanly devised constraints that structure human interaction', including both formal laws and regulations and informal norms and conventions of behaviour such as the belief systems and mental models of actors (North 1995: 21-22, cf. Hodgson 1994, Granovetter 1994, DiMaggio 1994). Developing the norms to support the rules is characterised as a slow process. Organisations can then be defined as 'the players: groups of individuals bound by a common purpose to achieve objectives', including political, economic, social and educational bodies (North 1995: 23). Institutions are said to become stable through the support of organisations with an interest in their perpetuation, and so institutional change requires the establishment of appropriate organisations that can foster changes in the formal rules and informal norms.

On this understanding the World Bank is an *organisation* operating within the *institutional* parameters defined by the dominant form of capital regulation. The Bank plays a role in performing (and thereby maintaining) the institutional parameters through and under which it and other organisations operate in its intellectual contributions and policy operations; and can also contribute to gradually changing these parameters through adjusting aspects of its practices, creating feedback effects within the institutional terrain. But importantly, although the Bank is a large player in

various areas of the development terrain, it is only one player in such changes and is itself constrained by the stickiness of its institutional context. This captures well one of this work's main conclusions with regard to the organisation's discursive practice of the 'knowledge economy'. Although the Bank is changing in the ways to be described, it operates within a relatively unchanged institutional context leading to the outcomes of its endeavours remaining largely similar, a different game being played by roughly the same rules. This also pertains to my reading of the discourse of reform that surrounds the Bank, for as much as the Bank may be loathed in various circles for its operations past and present it is argued that aiming simply to either reform or close down the Bank misses the point that within the same institutional context the same problems will probably recur.

Secondly, the Bank and other bodies are again interchangeably referred to as 'financial' or 'governance' institutions or organisations. Amongst these terms there is not so much to be gained from drawing the distinction, except insofar as governance is a term that should not be used of the Bank uncritically given that the IBRD's (the Bank's primary body) founding Articles of Agreement (its constitution in effect) define it as a body that 'shall not interfere in the political affairs of any member' and for whose staff '[o]nly economic considerations shall be relevant to their decisions' (World Bank 1989: Article 4, Section 10). For this reason 'finance' is the preferred and more restricted referent used throughout this work, a baseline that could be agreed upon by its donors, borrowers and critics to describe the organisation's main function. Its governmental activities will be considered in later chapters. The World Bank *has* extended its remit through reconceptualisations of development to include governmental issues such as a commitment to 'promote good governance and combat corruption' (World Bank 1998f: 11), but the restricted referent acts as a reminder of the Bank's designated terrain, that of being a Bank. The Articles of Agreement throw some light upon the Bank's efforts to reconstitute development discourse in ways that go beyond a narrowly-defined economic understanding to include governance and knowledge issues. If the Bank is to engage in a field for developmental purposes, then it helps if that field is defined as 'economic', providing good reason to broaden the terrain of economic thinking in order to broaden the Bank's legitimate mandate.

A third important choice of referent concerns the perceived nature and state of so-called 'globalisation' as an economic and governmental phenomenon, and so upon assessing the role of the World Bank in relation to its member countries. The proliferation of supra-state, sub-state and trans-state bodies would on first consideration appear to reduce the power and relevance of the state, displacing power within a multi-level global governance framework. Yet Paul Hirst and Graeme Thompson (1996) articulate a different perspective in arguing that the state retains a central position as a form of governance gateway through which power flows, acting as its distributor and regulator. By representing a specific geographically-located population, it is positioned to legitimise other more and less territorially-specific agencies in delegating to them sovereignty over various issues, spaces and flows (cf. Fairclough et al. 2001). It thereby occupies a central negotiating position in framing how flows of (trade, finance and investment) capital and people are freed or restricted, how governmental authority is distributed, and so how economies and politics maintain and dissolve boundaries¹¹. This approach positions the World Bank as an *international* multi-state agency rather than a trans-state *global* body, and so emphasises the importance of assessing the relative role of different state bodies as members, and the efficacy of their role in ensuring its democratic functioning and governance. This issue will be addressed in later chapters in observing dominant trends within the Bank's public narrative; the recurrence of this theme within critical responses to the Bank's activities; and thinking about possible options for effecting change within the Bank and the institutional context in which it operates.

Hirst and Thompson (1996: 15-16) state a preference for 'internationalised' over 'globalised' as a political descriptor, given this dependence upon the state framework, and also as an economic signifier because of the ongoing regional concentration of capital flows within the more 'developed' countries and the relative exclusion of other

¹¹ Another important aspect of the globalisation-internationalisation distinction concerns referring to either *multi-* or *trans-*national corporations (MNCs or TNCs); the MNC retaining a distinct national economic and bureaucratic organisational base, whilst the TNC moves beyond any single national system of regulation. It is the contention here, in agreement with Hirst and Thompson (1996) and Saskia Sassen (2000), that most companies retain some dependence upon a national base, with a central bureaucratic node and a perhaps international but still regionally-concentrated (thus international not global) base of stockholding interests. Even the most advanced informationally-oriented industries tend to have at least partly place-bound production processes because of resources and personnel skills requirements (Sassen 2000: 150). So even the largest or most immaterial corporations tend still to be dependent upon, and thus potentially harnessable by, national or regional governance bodies. MNCs rather than TNCs are thus referred to throughout this work; the distinction is a matter of degree, but the bias is towards the former rather than the latter.

areas. They contend that levels of economic openness are little different now than at the beginning of the 20th century, which saw a period of retraction and then gradual reopening rather than a progressive unfolding of the logic of the free-market; globalisation is treated as 'a myth, unsupported by the evidence' (Hirst 1997: 214)¹². This is in contrast to caricatures of the inexorable progression of increasingly unbridled capital flows drawing power away from any form of control other than the logic of the market. Such images, although often used in campaign literature as part of an attempt to motivate action, can also be disempowering in undermining the perceived feasibility of effecting change. Speculative financial-capital flows comparatively freely in its present form, but it is not beyond regulation through coordinated national government action or delegation to and thus empowerment of an intergovernmental body. With the political will restrictions such as the Tobin Tax¹³ *could* be put in place and enforced. State frameworks still possess (always somewhat limited) capacities for monitoring and directing aspects of international finance, and it is a matter of *priorities* that determine action with regard to economic regulation and not that the economy has gone beyond any reasonable level of control.

As JK Gibson-Graham (1996: 120-142) argues, stories of unstoppable globalisation perpetuate a 'politics of fear and subjection' portraying poorer countries in a victim role, encouraging the impression that globalisation is simply *happening* and all they can do is batten down the hatches and try to ride out the storm (cf. Hirst 1997: 208-211). This needs to be queried in seeking to strengthen the space from which interventions can be made upon the neoliberal project of dismantling barriers to trade in order to *produce* something approximating a globalised economy, irrespective of the costs borne in a more widely-defined economic sense. The contingency of the hegemonic relation needs instead to be emphasised in considering 'capitalism' as an open and indeterminate signifier reproduced in various modes that co-exist, intersect and overlap. Different stories need to be told in order to produce spaces within which alternative potentialities can be conceived and developed. The Internet's potential for

¹² See also Immanuel Wallerstein's (2000: 250) perspective upon long Kondratief cycles: 'The processes that are usually meant when we speak of globalization are not in fact new at all. They have existed for some 500 years.'

¹³ A tax proposed by economist James Tobin; a minute tax on every currency conversion designed to dampen flows of speculative capital by lessening potential profit margins. Lionel Jospin expressed an intention to put the idea forward as a proposal to the next meeting of European finance ministers in 2001, although nothing became of this following his failed bid for the French Presidential position in 2002 (Schiffers 2001).

rescripting narratives of intellectual property definition is considered in this regard in Chapter Three. For the reasons outlined, throughout the work the Bank is therefore where appropriate referred to as an International Financial Organisation (IFO).

Research-at-a-Distance

With regard to the three discursive threads under consideration, many contributions have been made to questions upon the nature of the knowledge economy and its implications for the currently dominant modes of both production and governance (e.g. Bell 1974, Hodgson 1999, Zuboff 1988, Rose 1999, Castells 2000, Stehr 2001, Block 1985); and also with the role of multilateral organisations in promoting certain models of governance and development (e.g. Amin 1990, Sen 2000, Strange 1997, 1994, Woods 2000). Less work has been done on drawing together the discourses of development, governance, and the knowledge economy (see Marglin & Marglin 1990, Banuri 1990a), and little at all on using this approach to examine the functioning of specific elements of the multilateral development machinery (but see for example Stone 2000, King & McGrath 2000a, 2000b, 2000c). It is important to critically understand this moment of discursive conjuncture, and to understand the Bank 'from a distance' as a machinery of knowledge production that can produce significant effects within it. This terrain is currently dominated by the contributions of its main donor-country member governments, which have tended towards neoliberal practices reproducing knowledge as a new 'fictitious commodity' (Polanyi 2001: 60-73) and so institutionalising modes of appropriation for intellectual property forms. As a large and diverse organisation contributions coming from under the Bank name at points advocate such an approach, and at others express a concern to protect an intellectual commons and encourage notions of knowledge sharing rather than appropriation. The potentiality for the Bank's voice to support a form of 'new' economy more likely to aid the world's poor, or to the contrary to consolidate the regulatory systems favoured by its dominant members (ironing out the creases in the dominant governmental-economic narrative) is worthy of exploration.

Distance in the chapter title refers primarily to the physical distance maintained between myself and my object of study. Distance has been used in focussing this research upon the Bank's online presence, its most consolidated and well-archived

means of self-promotion, publication and communication. This work presents an analytical 'surface scan' of the Bank's public performance within the World Wide Web terrain, an analysis of its public statements with a concern for the potential impact of its discursive contributions. The Bank's Web presence is, in theory, a universally accessible and user-friendly public relations interface encompassing massive information archives for framing and substantiating its arguments as well as many papers detailing the lineage of its thinking. Its websites are a centrally important device for analysing the organisation as a public actor and viewing it as it is seen by the vast majority of its interlocutors and analysts. Many people may also have contact with personnel within the Bank, but for all those with Internet access the web will be a common point of contact with Bank pronouncements and policy statements¹⁴. The Bank's online presence constitutes a live and frequently updated archive upon which one can be kept updated through e-newsletters and front page highlighting. On top of site-specific content (hundreds of sub-sites represent departments, networks, thematic foci, programmes of action and new more and less independent ventures) it features the great majority of Bank publications of the past 8 to 10 years¹⁵ as well as speeches by the President, the Chief Economist and other key members of its hierarchy. My research materials have been drawn almost entirely from the Bank's dense network of websites, as well as pieces published by Bank staff in their individual capacity; and a wealth of literature placed online by academic and government institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). On rare occasion I have made use of other materials obtained through email interaction with these groups.

In conducting this research I have thus not sought to approach the World Bank to engage in interviews, to investigate and gain an 'insider's view' of its culture, to analyse the minutiae of intra-Bank wrangles or the proposed rhetoric-reality gap in

¹⁴ Figures such as 5.5 million hits per month to the Bank's sites have previously been cited (Wilks 2001c), but straight measurements of Web activity are inadequate in that they cannot account for the nature of that activity (Jones 1999). No publicly available resources exist with which to break this figure down to see to what extent it is made up of a smaller number of people making repeated hits, Bank staff using the site as an occupational resource, search engine crawlers mapping out changes in site-content, and NGO-workers and government officials making use of the information and analysis provided by the Bank. Importantly, in relation to distance and empowerment, to say that it is the tool of the majority of the Bank's interlocutors is by no means to say that it is a tool available to the majority of the world affected by its activities.

¹⁵ The archive is frequently updated as documents previously stored in hard-copy are scanned and placed online in Adobe Acrobat (pdf) format.

Bank operations (Centro de Estudios Internacionales 2000). This work is several steps removed from the World Bank's applied social-economic practices, such as its loans and programmes of structural adjustment, in considering its involvement in the intertwining of the three mentioned discursive threads and the potential outcomes of this. The intention is to provide an insight into the discursive practices of one specific agglomeration of development machinery, analysing the Bank from such a distance in order to consider and analyse its position and influence within the discursive terrain of development. I have focused upon analysing one particular aspect of the Bank's public image and the context within which this is constructed through a series of key publications (its performances for a world audience through agenda declarations and organisational and programmatic changes). The public face referred to is the optimistic face of Western institutional-industrial development represented within its rhetoric. My understanding of 'rhetoric' is informed by the work of writers such as Dierdre McClosky (1994) and Michael Billig (1987), being concerned with its use as a pragmatic device for argument construction. That is, regarding a rhetorical position as that of being open to debate, considering the potential for truth within all statements and not implying (as the word does in its dominant usage) an emphasis upon style over substance intended to persuade audiences through eloquence more than substantial argument. I am interested to explore how the Bank's practices and discursive contributions are influenced by the rhetoric of its member governments and other actors.

Researching this piece involved establishing a body of texts for analysis (webpages and online documents) from those available within the online presence of the World Bank and other intergovernmental bodies and government departments, and non-governmental organisations. An initial assessment of keynote documents and statements of intent was then conducted and recurrent themes and terms of reference noted for further analysis throughout the rest of the literature¹⁶. The body of texts was then analysed with a sensitivity to recurrences and disjunctures in discursive texturing, writing styles and terminological preferences (between different organisations, different departments within the same organisation, and the same

¹⁶ Documents such as the *World Development Report 1998/99: Knowledge for Development* (World Bank 1998a), *Europe and the Global Information Society* (European Union 1994), the *Okinawa Charter on the Global Information Society* (G8 2000), *The Knowledge-Based Economy* (OECD 1996) and *The New Economy: Beyond the Hype* (OECD 2001a).

departments over time as revised editions of publications were produced). The outlined tools were then used in analysing how processes of problematisation have been engaged in attempting to shape the reproduction of the discourses under analysis and the positions of the actors participating therein – to construct and maintain sets of hegemonic relations, both within the World Bank and in the discursive terrains it occupies. The Bank's public performances, influenced by the flows of power that enable and constrain its actions, will in later chapters be seen to produce pressure for consensus and so the repression of internal debates and the glossing over of contested concepts. Such processes are never complete or entirely secured. Moments of counter-hegemonic discursive interventions are also noted in considering the discursive changes with regard to how the grip of the dominant set of practices might be loosened, so as to produce a more open terrain of discussion. As such I am concerned with whether the Bank could usefully be more openly rhetorical rather than less so. The 'open palm' of rhetoric (Billig 1987: 95) is suggested as a more productive mode of engagement through which the organisation could listen to, learn from, react to and address criticism, than the deterministic intellectual certainty which it has previously deployed in combination with its economic might.

Within the literature upon Internet research methodologies which has sprung up in recent years (e.g. Stein 1999, Jones 1999, Cooke 2001, Berkeley UC Library 2002, Ackermann & Hartman 1998, O'Dochartaigh 2001, Mann & Stewart 2000), four themes are strongly emphasised. Much focus is placed firstly upon arguing for the relevance of the Net as a research medium and explaining to the newcomer its functioning, potentialities and limits. Authors tend to delineate the realms of the Net (the World Wide Web, Telnet, intranets, email and so forth), and to highlight useful resources such as subject-specific archives and search engines (for instance the Web of Science) and more general but well-respected engines such as Google. Such texts at times read more as sophisticated beginner's guides than explorations of whether the methodological considerations facing researchers have been radically (or considerably, or not at all) altered by the introduction of this new medium. At other moments these writings concern themselves with the nature (if any) of community online, the means and manner of association therein, and the functionality of discourse analytic techniques for exploring these points. Thirdly, attempts are made to deal with procedures for conducting relevant online searches, referencing sources,

and assessing the reliability of unknown websites and the information provided; writings upon Internet research techniques frequently address the power of the Internet for disseminating information whatever its reliability. Finally, the potential transience of Net-based information sources (that sites can be shut down at any time due to lack of funding or legal complications) is also dealt with in passing.

Since this thesis is a study of the publicly available online presence of one institution, questions of online community are not of central relevance¹⁷. Meanwhile concerns about the reliability and worth of information provided online by the Bank is a matter for the thesis as a whole rather than an introductory exposition of methodological principles. Issues of the transience of online information have been relevant to my research on the Bank site given that early site-constructions and draft papers put online often disappear once an updated version is made available. Increasingly, older versions of the Bank's sites are being archived at different servers operated either by the Bank or other Internet archive providers, which means that the information remains available even if located elsewhere¹⁸. Matters of reliability become more relevant when considering critical sources of information upon the Bank which exhibit a considerable variety of political perspectives and research capabilities. It is important to be able to distinguish between those widely regarded and well-respected as established critical policy research groups, such as the Bretton Woods Project (BWP, www.brettonwoodsproject.org), Bank Information Center (BIC, www.bicusa.org) and BankWatch (www.bankwatch.org), those considered as humorous crank sites like the Whirled Bank and World Bunk, and those perceived as more stridently polemical 'anti-capitalist' organisations such as Abolish the Bank.

My approach to the abundance of critical online sources has been to use the hyperlinked networking and cross-referencing that structures and textures the Web as the basis for an assessment of site credibility, making use of the same forms of nodal density that I note the Bank producing through its interventions in the discursive practice of development. Reviews, references and hyperlinks from one site to another provide an assessment of the receiving site's perceived relevance and credibility to

¹⁷ Although such matters are given some space in considering the construction of critical trans-Bank networks between Bank staff and outside organisations in later chapters.

¹⁸ All references to hyperlinks contained herein state the date of downloading for this reason (dates of upload or site construction were only inconsistently available and so these have not been included except for papers presented online where the date was explicitly given).

the link provider with regard to writings on the considered topic. In this way hyperlinked references can reflect a site's perceived credibility amongst a decentralised self-governing - or at least self-selecting – online development 'community'. So when groups with well-established records such as BWP and BIC make reference to newer sites such as the WhirledBank and RealWorldBank¹⁹ as a humorous sketch and a budding critical archive respectively, this helps in building up an informed perspective upon the community's perception of the nature of content provision at these newer start-ups. External referencing by media sources can secondly be taken as an indication of the respect a site has developed for its information provision and analysis amongst the mainstreamed community of news-providing media. Sourcing of BWP documents and commentary by established media such as the BBC and the Guardian newspaper give credit to the perceived quality of analysis provided. These modes of assessment by networking and referencing have functioned as supplementary ingredients to my own analysis of sites' potential contributions to this analysis. Partnering initiatives with the Bank have thirdly been used as indicators that organisations' evidence, analysis and criticism have been accorded respect and consideration even by elements within the Bank structure. I return to the establishment of such connections in Chapter Eight in arguing that there can be a productive overlap in Bank-critical work between agents inside and outside the organisation. Supplementary to these web-based sources are email discussion lists with varying degrees of regulation. These critical networks can also be reasonably effective at forms of self-regulation, with perceived 'outlandish' commentary being critiqued within the same email stream and commentary from more 'respected' organisations acting as markers of reliability upon other commentary. Because of the *ad hoc* and mostly unregulated and unverifiable nature of list contributions, I have not relied upon them for factual information so much as for gauging community opinion upon the World Bank and its activities.

¹⁹ The RealWorldBank, a new start-up whose credibility was becoming established at the time of writing, folded early in 2002 after a promising start where it received contributions from a number of well-respected academic and civil society Bank critics, illustrating how the problem of Internet transience can affect smaller, less financially secure sites.

Bank Audience, Web-Structure and Front-Page Analysis

The Bank's sites present an incredibly complex, convoluted set of structures with many cross-postings, sites within sites, and seemingly small gateways opening onto whole new terrains, producing a challenge for anyone wishing to navigate them and glean something of the culture and politics of the organisation represented therein. One Bank researcher has referred to it as having impressive 'scope and volume' whilst being 'hampered by very mixed styles and designs, complex navigation and a lack of links to other sites' (Wilks 2001c, 2002). Complete main-site content is provided only in (American) English, 'the working language of the Bank' (World Bank 2001d); less extensive content is provided in French, Spanish and Russian, with links to these provided on the front-page, and Country Websites also provide further materials in other languages. This opens the content up to a great number of the world's peoples, but by no means makes it accessible to all. So beyond issues of who the audience is that could be given the capacity and the inclination to get online, another important question concerns who the audience is intended to be; who is it that the Bank seeks to talk to through its online publications, discussions and presentations? Or rather, who within the Bank is seeking to talk to whom?

Eight main groups of actors come to mind: other governance bodies, World Bank staff, corporations, financial investors, think-tanks, Non-Governmental or Civil Society Organisations (NGOs/CSOs), academics, and the media. Governance bodies – such as donor and borrower country-member government officials and research units, other inter-governmental organisations such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), World Trade Organisation (WTO) and other regional development banks (RDBs) – may not be so often addressed directly through the site; offline discussions, meetings and secure intranet postings will predominate, but website content will still serve in providing a material archive (publications, policy-documents, programme-results, research-findings) as well as updates on activities and priorities. Development-programme partners (corporations, NGOs/CSOs, local civil society groups) will be in a similar position, using the sites as a supplement to communication with relevant Bank staff.

Meanwhile, because of the size of the organisation, websites are also the easiest and most universally-accessible means by which to ensure that all Bank staff themselves

can potentially remain aware of ongoing research and development activities, programmes, policy discussions and events. Independent research units, academics and campaign organisations can find many of the raw materials they require for studies and critical reports freely available on the Bank's sites; whilst potential financial investors (in both the Bank and its borrower countries) can locate years of annual financial reports and future projections of economic performance for both the Bank and borrower-member countries within. Finally, the media are often addressed through press briefings, but can also trawl Bank-sites for more detail as well as consulting the Bank's self-selected media presentation (daily cuttings of references to the Bank from the world's press, edited by Bank staff) for both other media perspectives and a sense of what stories the Bank is happy to retell in this way. The main group that we might consider the Bank as being less concerned to speak to through its online presence is that most extensive group of those affected by its policies & programmes termed 'the poor'. The Bank's site tends more to *speak for* such groups, or to re-present their opinions through its own programmes. Changing constructions of, and attitudes to, this group are observed through the shifts in development discourse and the World Bank's discursive practice considered in Chapter Four and beyond, but for now at least the poor remain predominantly a passive object of its online discourse rather than an active subject.

The presentation of the Bank's homepage is very much designed with a public-relations consciousness to appeal to the passing interested browser as well as to reinforce upon all visitors the Bank's advertised mission. The starting point for interaction is framed such that we are all (Bank, critic, passer-by) positioned as being together in this mission. From October 1999 until a redesign in October 2001 (a large part of my period of research) the homepage's headline banner prominently displayed the Bank logo, which recurs somewhere on all Bank-sponsored or partnered sites ensuring brand recognition (since October 2001 the logo has remained in much reduced form, and the Bank's five subsections are now listed underneath the World Bank title). Underneath this was inscribed the emotionally inclusive, aspiring slogan 'our dream is a world free of poverty', which remained on the headline banner until August 2002. Alongside the logo and slogan sat a picture of a smiling child of 'developing' country origin, which changed at least once a month. Although this image has now been removed from the front-page, images of smiling children recur

frequently throughout the Bank's web domain. The innocence and happiness of these children indicates the intended (implied actual) dream/product of the Bank's activities. This connects with Bank President James Wolfensohn's (1995) catch-line considered further in Chapter Four that the thing that drives him in his work is the thought of 'the smile on a child's face' when development projects are successful. The simplicity and wholesomeness of this desire, the naïve good intention that it expresses, is embracing. A universal 'we' is postulated in the expressed desires. The smile on the face of the Bank in these first moments of contact is unguarding – all it wants to do is help.

Beneath this banner we are shown a series of highlighted areas with links to further more detailed pages for each, including links to its organisational subsets – IBRD, IDA, IFC, MIGA and ICSID. The page here conveys the mixed messages that embody the Bank as a whole, which I consider in more detail in Chapter Five; financial statements and links to appraisal reports portraying its standing as an established institution making a steady and regular profit, with links to information for businesses and its bond holders; news sections and e-newsletters suggest an online role as an economic analyst and news provider upon the economic state of the world and the global potentialities and risks for capital; links to project summaries and appraisals establish the Bank as a facilitator of industrialisation and an interest to Northern industrial capital interests; Bank 'hot topics', themes and links to latest publications and high-profile research findings position it as a respected research organisation and intellectual community; whilst development statistics, profiles of 'Development-in-Action' and educational foci alongside the smiling child remind browsers of the hopeful elements of the development project. The World Bank Group Web homepage thus provides a first indication of the many roles performed under its extensive banner as well as of the standing of its online presence as a major assemblage of research materials for evaluating the organisation's potential and actual roles within the contemporary (contingent) conjunction of discourses upon knowledge economies and societies, governance, and development.

Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the approach adopted herein of researching the Bank from a distance and considering its public performance of a development agenda. A number of points have been noted concerning the complexity of the organisation and the influence of its more dominant Northern government members, a topic that will be returned to in Chapter Five. More importantly, the matter has been given an initial address of approaching the Bank as an organisation that operates within, and contributes to (but does not determine) the reproduction and adjustment of an institutional terrain. This terrain includes topics such as accepted conceptions of capital, those elements that are defined as such and thus brought within the sphere of economic considerations, and the predominant means of its regulation. Approaching the Bank as one organisation involved in the reproduction of such institutional 'rules of the game' of social functioning cautions against being too dismissive or condemnatory of the Bank in itself without considering the influence of the forces and interests that surround it.

In concluding, it seems significant that the World Bank's slogan is a *dream* of a world free of poverty. This seemingly warm and inclusive sentiment can also be read as an acknowledgement of the failure of its development efforts, or of structural flaws in the development project more widely conceived; of the need for a 'world free of poverty' to remain a dream rather than a real possibility, a mission statement for the Bank with a timeline and achievable targets. This provides an indication of the institutional constraints within which it operates, and that it reproduces through its practices; many such targets have been and are continually re/set, as will be addressed in Chapter Four, but some fifty years after the Bank's establishment it is still an organisation dreaming of its ultimate goal. Chapters Two and Three will next consider the knowledge economy as discursive and governmental practice before returning to this problem in Chapter Four in treating changes in the discursive practice of the international development project in the context of its conjuncture with the knowledge economy.

Performing the 'Knowledge Economy' – is it all in the mind?

Introduction

This chapter analyses the theoretical terrain of knowledge and information economy and society discourse. An abundance of terms have been deployed in defining and analysing a perceived growth in levels of knowledge and information in contemporary economies and societies. The terminological set exists as a somewhat indeterminate conceptual soup covering a composite range of developments in knowledge and information production and distribution processes, and technologies and organisational processes. The discourse plays a performative role in shaping our understanding of these changes. Two important distinctions that will be considered concern speaking of a growth in *information* or *knowledge*, and treating this growth with respect to its *economic* or wider *societal* effects. This chapter argues that neither of these approaches to conceiving of the social and economic changes afoot are particularly useful as analytical tools (the knowledge economy is regarded as a discursive construct lacking much substantive evidential support), but that they function well as contemporary modes of governmentality, a subject that is then pursued further in the following chapter. Problems with the 'new' economy's conceptualisation and measurement are detailed and the ambiguity and elasticity of its underlying concepts and definitions are noted. Certain *perceived* changes are noted to have been based upon weak premises whilst other *observed* changes have at times been exaggerated, overoptimistically interpreted, or otherwise poorly analysed in terms of potential outcomes. The dominant discursive trend is observed overall to be optimistic and enthusiastic about the potential harboured for socio-economic liberation and the demise of exploitation. This optimism promises a vision worth struggling for, but to presume that it is inherent within the logic of the changes considered is argued to be a recipe for complacency when these changes could equally well be regarded as extending the logic and operations of capital to new 'capital' forms. However the discourse is argued to be complex and still relatively

open and underdetermined, allowing space for new contributions and explorations of alternative understandings and approaches.

Knowledge Economies and Societies

One of the most common referents within this discourse has been to the knowledge or knowledge-based economy (Machlup 1962, Jéquier 1983), whilst 'information', 'learning' and 'post-industrial' have been frequently employed as alternate prefixes (Stonier 1983, OECD 1986, Hodgson 1999, cf. Guinet 1996). Other contributors meanwhile have referred to the growth of a knowledge, information, knowledgeable or post-industrial society (Lane 1966, Bell 1974, Touraine 1971, Naisbitt 1984, Livingstone 1999, Castells 2000a, Stehr 2001), whilst yet others have invoked less specific notions such as 'super-industrialism' (Toffler 1970) and 'post-capitalism' (Drucker 1993)²⁰.

With regard firstly to treating the 'economy' and 'society' as objects of knowledge-oriented change, the knowledge economy is conceptually the more focussed of the two terms, more restricted in its analysis of how information and knowledge are increasingly treated as commodifiable forms of capital subject to profit-maximising techniques. Many writers are willing to concede that we have always lived in a 'knowledge economy' of one form or another insofar as knowledge has always been a central aspect of economic functioning (Castells 1993). On this view economic development can be seen as 'primarily an epistemological problem', capital being 'knowledge imposed on the material world' and machines being 'frozen knowledge' (Boulding 1971: 25-6). Even most knowledge economy sceptics would accept that we are experiencing, or have experienced, specific alterations in the dominant mode of production through the development of new technologies and their effects upon the mass distribution of information and knowledge. Debate can then focus on the scale, significance and possible outcomes of these changes, such as whether knowledge has acceded to the primacy as a factor of production accorded to it by knowledge economy enthusiasts. The distinction between past and present tense here reflects

²⁰ For ease of reference throughout this thesis (and for consistency with an analysis of the World Bank's *Knowledge Bank* discourse), one set of terms will tend to be used throughout in talking of *knowledge* economies and societies, although *information* will also be used as a prefix when appropriate with regards to cited texts.

the relative importance ascribed to the development of modern Information Communication Technologies (computers and the Internet, satellite systems and so forth). Some argue that these only increase the intensity of developments realised through earlier global communications 'revolutions' like the advent of telephones, faxes and television (Hirst & Thompson 1996), whilst others contend that radical qualitative changes are being realised through these new technologies (Castells 2000a).

What is qualitatively different about pronouncements upon the knowledge society is the more totalistic, holistic understanding of knowledge-oriented, reflexive and self-aware social groups as well as increases in knowledge's creation, reproduction and distribution – the production of a knowledge culture. Again, it has been argued from a variety of perspectives that all societies are in one sense information or knowledge societies (Lane 1966: 650). Firstly insofar as information gathering, storage and control are essential elements of state functioning (Giddens 1985), and the production of numbers makes the modern governance of large populations possible (Rose 1991). Secondly insofar as engaging with the production and use of knowledge is regarded as a defining characteristic of human existence (Osborne 1998). Knowledge society discursive contributions shift the register of discussion onto a new plane by ascribing to knowledge the *defining* role in shaping modern societies. Knowledge societies are societies which express greater reflexivity in examining their beliefs and aspire to using objective standards in the process, which produce, store and organise knowledge to enlighten their goals and help in their pursuit, and so express greater agency in constituting the social – defining and shaping the spaces they encapsulate (Lane 1966, Stehr 2001).

Considerable generality and ambiguity are apparent within these brief descriptions, there being no obvious way in which they could be substantiated beyond anecdotal evidence. Knowledge and information here become 'indeterminate explanandum' (Osborne 1998: 22-3), elastic and indeterminate signifiers open to interpretation in a variety of ways to produce the desired analysis. Because of this the knowledge or information society has been characterised as a *gestural* category more than a focussed tool of social analysis (Osborne 1998: 22-3), a 'heuristic device' for exploring features of our contemporary world (Webster 1995: 24). The notion can also further be viewed as a *framing device* which emphasises the impression that we are

entering a new era and not just a new economic phase. When the 'knowledge society' is deployed as a rhetorical tool of governmental discourse, it stands a greater chance of filtering more deeply and effectively into the social consciousness and thereby encouraging institutional innovations than would the possibly more 'banal' (in the public eye) or restricted discussions of economic changes. The next chapter will consider how these discursive practices have been engaged as a mode of governmentality producing and governing new types of subject; fostering the entrepreneurial culture governments seek under the contemporary dominant understanding of what makes economies competitive with regard to, for instance, encouraging citizens to accept responsibility for retraining and marketing themselves to potential employees.

What is the Knowledge Economy?

We can delineate four streams into which most writers cannot be tightly pigeonholed, but which nevertheless help in visualising the terrain; the post-industrialists, the networkers, the futurists and the managers. The 'post-industrialists' made first exploratory steps in thinking about knowledge's increasing importance as a factor of production, and thus the possibility that we could be moving beyond the industrial era. 'Networkers' are more concerned with the importance of defining networks as a mode of organisation affecting the economy and other areas of life. These writings draw upon advances in Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) and their proliferation alongside organisational shifts promoting networks as a mode of thinking. 'Futurists' may reflect aspects of contemporary thinking and influence the public mood should their work gain a high profile, but do not provide detailed analysis of trends in the economy so much as make hyperbolic declarations of future trends based upon anecdotal evidence. 'Managers' refers to those contributors to the knowledge management element of this discursive field, underpinned by and in one sense an outgrowth of the preoccupations of the first two streams, but driven by the insights and priorities of managerial thinking (see for example Davenport & Prusak 1998). This form of specific, applied discursive practice assumes the existence of a knowledge economy from the outset (an abundance of knowledge that needs to be managed for operational efficiency), and so is of lesser interest in considering the

establishment and consolidation of definitions of the knowledge economy as a discursive event.

The focus in this work is therefore upon writers who fit more neatly into the post-industrialist and networker streams. Whilst there is broad enough agreement between these groups to justify drawing loosely upon all writers in articulating and assessing the knowledge economy thesis (Kumar 1978), the distinction in emphasis between post-industrialist and network-oriented writings is important in analysing the notion's contemporary functionality as an analytical and governmental tool. The two streams are not opposed, but rather network thinking has developed from elements of the post-industrial along with other concerns stemming from discourses of management and technology.

We might usefully begin by asking – what is meant by the 'knowledge economy'? A knowledge economy is frequently defined as one where knowledge has become the primary form of capital, where the weight of the economy is based in knowledge-related activities as a proportion of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employment (Bell 1962, 1980); one where the dominant mode of production process organisation has changed due to technological developments increasing their complexity and a focus upon enabling faster information flows throughout organisations in a more competitive economic environment (Bell 1962, Castells 2000a, Lash & Urry 1994, Hardt & Negri 2000, Toffler 1970, Hodgson 1999, Cohen 1993, Drucker 1993). Within both the industrial and service sectors it is argued that knowledge in the new economy acts as the primary source of innovation and economic value-added and thus competitive advantage. Other forms of capital also tend to depend more upon knowledge-related developments such as improving the production and use of the fruits of scientific research, producing new designs to capture markets, and engaging improved management methods. Castells (2000a: 17) asserts that all of this indicates that a new mode of capitalist development is occurring wherein 'the action of knowledge upon knowledge itself' becomes the main source of productivity. The changes in question affect all economic sectors, producing a distinctive form of socio-economic system that *subsumes* industrial economies rather than replacing them, one that now draws directly upon the potentialities of the human mind's symbol-processing capabilities as a factor of production (Castells 2000a: 31, 100).

A major contributing factor to knowledge economy discourse was the emergence of an 'economics of knowledge' in the late 1950s. Robert M Solow's (1957) paper 'Technical Change and the Aggregate Production Function' put forward the argument that up to half of economic growth could not be accounted for by changes in capital stocks and labour; the missing element, he contended, was technological change. The 'Solow Residual' was born and economists began working to measure this missing portion of economic growth and account for the impact of technological innovation or other missing variables²¹. This constituted the first steps in thinking the connections to be drawn out later once knowledge itself became the focus of consideration as a factor of production in all areas of economic life, rather than specifically the application of knowledge to produce technological innovation. The main supposition of knowledge economy discourse is that industrialised countries have entered, and other countries are entering, into a new stage of economic development where the missing contributor to economic growth is revealed to be the growth of knowledge and all its related effects. This is interpreted as producing huge changes in how economies function and so how they need to be governed (the areas of comparative advantage most worth pursuing, the employment prospects of different areas of activity and so the advantages of various education policies, and so forth).

As indicated by the name of the first stream of such thinking, the knowledge economy is also frequently associated with a decline in the importance of the industrial economy and a corresponding rise in the role of the service sector. Post-industrial discourse posits a vast growth in service sector revenue and employment as an integral aspect of knowledge economy developments (Bell 1974, Lane 1966) that network thinking then takes as a baseline assumption. The majority of this expanding service sector's workers are argued to be involved in activities where information (its creation, processing, distribution and management) is an integral element of the work performed. Industry is said to be on the decline in the most economically-advanced countries as a result of technological change and competitive profit-maximising practices, less complicated work being automated or outsourced to economies where

²¹ The World Bank's Chief Economist and Vice President from February 1997 to February 2000, Joseph Stiglitz, whose major research interest is informational economics and who is widely regarded as being a major driving force in the Knowledge Bank agenda at the World Bank, was supervised in his PhD at MIT by Solow and wrote his second academic paper with him (Solow & Stiglitz 1968).

labour is cheaper (e.g. Davenport & Prusak 1998: 13). The service sector is said to be growing due to swiftly rising living standards resulting from other knowledge economy developments leading to increased leisure time and income and thus greater demand for leisure services (Hirst & Thompson 1996). Technological developments are also framed as contributing to a growth in information-related and distance-operated commercial and government services (e.g. telephone and Internet-based).

The Foundations of the Knowledge Economy

In relation to this discourse, it is important to ask what is meant by 'knowledge' in relation to economic activity and development. Much literature exhibits weakness at this early and fundamental stage with producing explicit operational definitions susceptible to cogent empirical and theoretical analysis. Two post-industrialists, Fritz Machlup and Daniel Bell, provide good illustrations of writers who have tried to grapple with the question and produced quite different – more wide and narrow – answers that serve as marker points by which to negotiate the terrain. Machlup's (1962: 21-2) *Knowledge Production in the United States* uses an inclusive and subjective definition of 'who knows and why and what for' as its operational principle in distinguishing a wide variety of classifications for knowledge from the 'practical' forms used in business and political affairs, through more 'intellectual' manifestations, to 'pastime' varieties embodied in small-talk and the 'spiritual' form apparent in religious texts and practices (ending with the ambiguous category of 'unwanted' knowledge). Daniel Bell (1974: 175-181), by contrast, in *The Coming of the Post-Industrial Society*, marks out a more narrow and restrictive utilitarian definition of knowledge, distinguishing it from forms of information exchange such as news and entertainment. Knowledge, for Bell, consists of organised sets of statements of facts or ideas expressing new judgements, or new presentations of older judgements. Knowledge here is that which is objectively known, an 'intellectual property' attached to some particular person or group and certified by some form of social recognition such as copyright or publishing. It is part of the 'social overhead investment of society'.

Machlup's (1962: 21-2) definition proposes a way of understanding and categorising knowledge's multiple functions, and tries to account for the meaning that the knower attaches to the known. Yet the approach raises three important concerns that recur more or less directly in a number of later writings (e.g. Toffler 1970, World Bank 1998a). He firstly states that for ordinary purposes 'all information is knowledge' (although not all knowledge can be considered information) and that there is no purpose in making a distinction between the two except in special circumstances. Secondly he equates the *production* of knowledge with its *communication*, the former producing socially new knowledge and the latter reproducing knowledge that is subjectively new to the receiver. Both of these propositions are problematic and contribute to a concern with how any consistent quantitative analysis of knowledge production, distribution and use – necessary for constructing an argument to the effect of knowledge's increasing importance within economic activity – can be attempted.

Distinguishing between information and knowledge is necessary to recognising the social and economic costs and hoped-for benefits of producing knowledge. The notion of an 'information pyramid' (Dedijer & Jéquier 1987: 14) is a useful visualisation for thinking about the *labour* involved in taking the pyramid's widest base section, great quantities of data, and refining and filtering these into smaller but more significant quantities of synthesised information. These can then be finally analysed and processed in order to produce useful knowledge. As Davenport and Prusak (1998: 5) put it, knowledge is 'broader, deeper and richer' than information. Whilst such distinctions will never be clear-cut, a negotiated consensus upon a separation of terms would be useful to delineating effects indicating the emergence of an information, or knowledge, economy. Furthermore, 'intelligence' sits at the pinnacle of Dedijer and Jéquier's structure, pointing to questions upon the usefulness of any increases in knowledge production that occur outside of solid intelligence systems directing knowledge-production to socially-constructive ends. Without this, we could end up swimming in a sea of (socially useless but individually profitable) knowledge. Thus this is more than a matter of semantics, being relevant to the direction of economic developments and the location of economic value-added within different levels of information pyramid processing (relating in turn to potential new international divisions of labour, discussed in the next chapter).

It is secondly important to distinguish between the *production* and *reproduction* of knowledge, although the two are often conflated in selecting indicators of knowledge's growth. Both production and reproduction could contribute to a growing importance of knowledge within the economy and so to changes in social organisation and the dominant mode of production; to one definition of a knowledge economy, in effect, that is the commodification and industrialisation of knowledge. But to argue specifically about the economic impact of an accelerating *growth* of knowledge a boundary need be maintained between the economic contributions of *socially new* knowledge, and profit-maximising techniques 'squeezing wealth from knowledge' (Langrish et al. 1972: 2). One of the most often cited pieces of evidence for a growing knowledge-base is growth in the materials employed in knowledge's *representation*, storage, and dissemination – books, libraries, universities and degrees obtained therein (Lane 1966, Toffler 1970, Bell 1974). The conflation leads to the construction of unsubstantiated statistics of hyperbolic proportions, particularly amongst futurist writers, asserting that scientific ideas come and go twenty to a hundred times faster today than they did one hundred years ago based on an estimation of the growth in scientific publications (Toffler 1970: 158).

To avoid such unproductive hyperbole, we need to distinguish and mark off, for instance, publishing houses who farm out books upon a topic with little new to contribute, and software houses who release new versions of programmes with only minor bug-fixes. Improving the distribution of information and knowledge may foster what Robert Lane (1966: 649) terms a 'knowledgeable society', but this says little of the role of knowledge *production* in the economy. The problems with concretely measuring contributions to knowledge, and distinguishing these from informational improvements, could go some way to explaining why the conflation of these issues persists in many knowledge economy writings. Problems of the means of measurement will be returned to in Section VII.

Returning now to Bell's approach, this is more open to statistical analysis given the focus upon *owned* knowledge that can more easily be accounted for. But for the same reason this approach is overly restrictive, recognising only that which can be in some form commodified, and only once it has been so. It does not recognise the importance of Machlupian developments such as the acquisition and deployment of tacit knowledge in relation to managerial practices, shop floor organisation or

interactions between labour and technology. In so doing it fences off the possibility of understanding changes in economic and social life based upon these. Bell (1974: 197) instead focuses upon new relationships between science and technology accelerating the pace of knowledge production, the 'systematic joining of science to invention' allowing theoretical science to lead in shaping technology. The improved technological forecasting that stems from this, along with better industrial organisation, allows for more systematic investment and intensified innovation cycles through reduced time delay between idea formation, technology development, and product diffusion. Knowledge is considered the fuel of the technological engine, the accelerative thrust that increases the pace of social change in a cycle that feeds back upon itself it to generate further increases in knowledge (cf. Toffler 1970, Stonier 1983). Bell characterises the changing social organisation of science as the development of more specific fields of research stemming from advances in understanding which branch out and coordinate interests and findings, producing increased levels of specialisation within an intricate division of labour.

The work of Bell and Machlup can thus be viewed as initial contributions to theorising and quantifying the role of knowledge in contemporary economies and societies. Machlup's work attempts to classify knowledge in its multiple forms, including making observations upon the role of tacit knowledge (that knowledge which is known but not articulated, and perhaps cannot be formulated in the abstract without losing something of the essence of what is known, as with skills acquired through the trial and error of their performance). Bell's work observes the importance of networking as a mode of organising knowledge production, in writing of the branching and coordinating of specialised fields of scientific study. Bringing these two streams of post-industrial thinking together, the writers outlined below have generalised and amplified the importance of network forms throughout society, with an emphasis upon tacit knowledge's flourishing outside of hierarchical (bureaucratic) organisational systems.

The Networked Economy

'[T]he new competition is one of access to information, resources, and partners...position within a network means everything' (Powell & Smith-Doerr 1994: 394)

Networker literature argues that networks have come to dominate as tools of communication, social and economic organisation, and governance, contributing to the emergence of a networked and informational era from the industrial epoch (Lash & Urry 1994, Castells 2000a, 2000b, Rhodes 1995, 1997, Powell & Smith-Doerr 1994, Foray & Lundvall 1996). Individuals, states, corporations and other social, political and economic organisations are said to be adjusting their styles of association and becoming more 'network-ready'. The network thus functions as an abstract model of a mode of organisation that may be engaged at many levels, as well as a way of conceiving the flows of information, goods, people and capital argued to constitute an increasingly globalised economy. These developments stem in large part from ICT developments that facilitate swift global communications and massive increases in information and capital flows. The economic significance of such projected developments is considered here with regard to enterprise and the labour market within already-industrialised countries, before observing problems in the measurement of knowledge economy claims, and in the following chapter the significance of these developments to less-industrialised countries and international labour markets will be returned to.

One of the most thorough and commanding reflections upon the theme of the network as a mode of social and economic organisation is provided in Manuel Castells' *The Information Age, Vol.1. The Rise of the Network Society* (2000a)²². Castells (2000a: 77) puts forward a vision of an informational, global, and networked economy produced through a 'historical linkage between the knowledge-information base of the economy, its global reach, its network-based organizational form, and the information technology revolution'. The new economy is conceived as a space of global flows of information, goods, people and capital, with correlative effects within the coordination and governance of the social. It is contended to be global in that although most economic activities within each nation-state remain locally-oriented, they still depend upon the flows of capital produced through a core of activities which take place within a series of globally networked metropolitan hubs (cf. Lash & Urry 1994, Sassen 1991).

²² Castells has become the standard-bearer for network society thinking, the fanfares of a 'new age' or a 'new existence' ringing loud in his work (Castells 2000a: 509). It is thus with his writings that I deal most directly here.

On this argument the manifestation of an increasingly competitive global economic space combined with the accelerating pace of knowledge production contributes to the emergence of new forms of organisation wherein 'the action of knowledge upon knowledge itself' becomes the main area of productivity (Castells 2000a: 17). Corporations are firstly argued to have become more networked as production has been outsourced to supplier companies offering cheaper factors of production. Turning the production process as a whole into a contractual relationship for the capital-holding organisation (rather than just the relationship of labour to the producer) enables greater flexibility and mobility as to where operations are based in pursuit of a competitive edge. The advent of ICTs has eased and quickened this process of dispersing and relocating operations globally. Secondly the acceleration of knowledge production is argued to have produced increasingly intense cycles of innovation as firms use information and knowledge as tools for gaining comparative advantage (Guinet 1996). Corporations would require increasingly large groups of specialists to establish their presence as more central 'nodes' within technological and communication networks and ensure access to current information. This becomes implausible given that advanced technical markets pose large barriers to entry in the costs of establishing research bases that can be at the cutting edge of an industry (laboratories and tools as well as personnel). As such, co-operative partnering of research and development work between companies becomes a more viable and desirable business proposal (Hodgson 1999: 90, Castells 2000a: 176-7, cf. Foray & Lundvall 1996, Nielsen 1996). The proposed end-result is that the main unit of enterprise becomes the projects established at a meeting point between the common interests of a number of corporate agents, a 'network enterprise' (Castells 2000a: 187-8).

In order to understand what is happening here we need a better understanding of how the network is conceived, and the role it is being expected to perform. Castells (2000b: 6) emphasises the level of abstraction within his model in referring to the network society as an 'ideal type', but even so the model used is inherently problematic, being based upon an idealised model of ICTs such as the Internet. Castells' (2000a: 501, 407-9) use of the term is summed up by one simple definition of 'a set of interconnected nodes', nodes being points through which some kind of flow passes, and the nature of the node thus depending upon what kind of network

we speak of²³. Within networks 'flows have no distance, or the same distance, between nodes', and nodal distance thus varies between zero and infinity in a simple and clean matter of inclusion within and exclusion from the network. Networks are asserted to have no centre, main nodes being mere 'switchers' following the logic of the network. The concern is with the 'space of flows' (Castells 2000b: 13) and not so much with the actors-become-nodes through which flows flow, who simply play their part if they are to stay within the network.

Castells elsewhere problematically attempts to cleave a clean distinction between structure and agency in reifying the network as a structure produced by actors which constitute its nodes (Castells 2000b: 15-17). The network is firstly treated as a value-free automaton which processes only what it is programmed to perform whilst actors (nodes) struggle to programme the networks. However once the programme is set nodal agency is weakened since there is argued to be little chance of changing a network's programming in any way incompatible with its core goals. The nodes that constitute the network need adapt to or else be excluded from it as its 'evolutionary nature' means that it readjusts whenever necessary to exclude all that is no longer useful to its existence 'as cells do in biological processes'. At the most meta-level of such thinking we are presented with a 'network of networks' of global capital, 'a faceless collective capitalist, made up of financial flows operated by electronic networks' (Castells 2000a: 505, cf. 2000b: 17). A symbiotic relationship is suggested, a self-regulating global economy substantiated by flows of goods and people, given its face by flows of signs, nourished by flows of capital and brought to a form of distributed self-awareness through flows of communications, with an evolutionary disposition that allows it to develop in the face of changing circumstances.

Such a vision denies the agentive role of 'nodes', positioning them as passive transmitters of a fixed currency and inferring the ideal of 'double-click' informational networks producing 'transport *without* deformation', of which Latour (1999: 15-16, emphasis in original) is so derisive. Somatic effects stem from such an approach in so far as the relations within networks are perceived as more horizontalised, equal and

²³ As he says (Castells 2000b: 5), the network is an old form of social organisation. Indeed it must be insofar as connection and communication (flows) are founding principles of human societies. The language thereby elides the extent to which the theory does not distinguish anything particularly new, but rather points to social structures produced by dominant actors which over-determine the actions of themselves and others once they are set in place.

open than within traditionally defined hierarchical structures (e.g. European Union 1997). Yet as with financial market-networks in which it is through the process of currency translation that profits are sought, so with the passage of 'flows' within networks is it through the translation, appropriation and retransmission of that which flows that interests are advanced. Switchers in effect constitute points through which flows must pass to enable connections to be established. The process of problematising a situation so as to constitute a point through which others must pass is an exercise in channelling flows of power, and when successful can reconstitute the node/point at which this occurs as more connected (clustered) and thus more central to and influential upon the interests of all that it is connected to²⁴.

Labour and the New Economy

Critical literature has considered several dangers with the acceleration of technological and organisational changes associated with the new economy pertaining to labour market conditions. These concern the returns made upon capital accumulated and reinvested, an imbalance between the supply and demand of knowledge and skills, and a distinction between changes in activities undertaken in the workplace and changing in the culture of the workplace. As we will see in the next chapter, governmental discourse can be similarly trepidatious about these developments even though it tends to make grand pronouncements upon the potential gains for developing countries.

To deal firstly with the accumulation of capital, the role of capital in maintaining class divisions is likely to be extended to intellectual capital with any increase in the centrality of information and knowledge to economic activities. The mass of the labour force are likely to maintain low general knowledge levels due to social inequalities in access to education whilst those from more privileged backgrounds who pass through the basic education channels to go on to higher education and professional specialisations will be more likely to secure themselves a niche within the market for their expertise (Bell 1974). Importantly, once this far they can expect to find the time, money and even employment allowances to continue to develop their skills and so

²⁴ This is in effect the subject of much Social Network Analysis (SNA) work which looks at the constitution of 'networks' in terms of the levels, densities and strengths of connections and interaction between actors (see for example Wellman & Berkowitz 1997, Carroll & Fennema 2002, Boulder 2002).

stay at the front of their field, reinvesting their skills in learning to ensure that this time is spent productively.

A growing white-collar workforce could remain as exploited as any blue-collar industrial sector so long as it remains a grouping of relatively interchangeable labour units played off against one another in a competitive labour market. The data-entry clerk or call-centre employee could remain in a position little different from the shop-floor factory worker in this regard. At the other end of the scale a new social elite could emerge who move beyond the need to specialise and acquire expertise in general methods of analysis, transcending the increased pace of economic turnover to become agenda-setters for future knowledge production and directing the changes occupying the rest of society (Bell 1974: 213-216). An 'advanced services middle class' involved in the symbol-intensive culture industries, and high-value aspects of the leisure, education, health and retail industries meanwhile could benefit from the increasing importance of informational products imbued with sign-value. A 'culturati' increasingly involved in the production and consumption of 'individuated and high value-added symbols' in a relatively enclosed world providing a market for each other's produce (Lash & Urry 1994: 164-5).

Secondly in relation to speaking of an imbalance between the supply and demand for skills and knowledge, hierarchical divisions of labour could become re-instituted within knowledge-based fields through an over-supply of qualifications (Kumar 1978: 214). The perceived necessity of higher education qualifications as one step towards achieving employability has already and will further broaden demand. If this demand increases at a rate which produces qualified applicants in greater numbers than they are required then 'credential inflation' will result (cf. Collins 1979). A widening gap between skill acquisition and actual skill requirements could result in jobs being set at increasingly high formal skill levels not because of any change in the nature of the work, but simply as a filtering device by employers responding to the over-abundance of qualifications. As employers take on only the most skilled staff and so raise entry levels to industry the pace of technological development could in turn be increased, feeding back into the demands placed upon new entrants as well as the expected returns for the labour involved.

Two outcomes are possible here, firstly ‘hyper-acceleration’ (Foray & Lundvall 1996: 26-8) of economic change and market demands as the speed of innovation hastens, increasingly dividing the included few skilled workers from the majority of relatively under-qualified. The pace of change could further create pressure to continually retrain in order to remain employable as skills-demands change with greater rapidity. Workers risk devoting energy to areas of specialisation which become obsolete as new forms of technology and modes of organisational production develop (cf. Toffler 1970, Hodgson 1999). Secondly ‘under-employment’ (Livingstone 1999: 171) – not gaining work that makes maximal use of one’s qualifications and skills – could become a common experience as the proliferation of knowledge economy discourse generates an increasing popular demand for lifelong learning which goes unrewarded by a lack of changes in the jobs market except for the highly-qualified few. An increasing proportion of the working population could be excluded from fulfilling and financially rewarding work should the knowledge society dwarf the knowledge economy at a general level in this way (Livingstone 1999: 164). The danger arises of increasing income inequalities between less and more-skilled labour, and growing unemployment amongst unskilled labour²⁵.

Finally in reply to the optimistic vision of knowledge acquisition enabling employees to make greater demands upon employers as a result of their possessing niche or tacit expertise upon how the production process might be utilised most effectively (e.g. Hodgson 1999), we need to distinguish between changes in *activities* undertaken in the workplace and changes in the *culture* of the workplace. Having confidence in one’s greater importance as a unit of the production process due to increased skills levels is a quite separate matter from acquiring the skills, and such points of ‘labour subjectivity’ (Hull 2000: 327) are crucial to changing relations in the workplace. Submission might still be induced from a workforce in many different ways unless the culture of the workplace is altered. Furthermore, if increases in the knowledge component of labour are matched by – or induced by – increases in the knowledge component of fixed capital, then these workers will still be dependent upon the capital of the firm in order to be able to employ their skills.

²⁵ As when Neef (1998: 4) observes that in the US the top 20% of the labour force considered to be knowledge workers earn more than the other 80% of the working population combined.

The greater skill-levels demanded of employees to operate more complex machinery could perhaps better be expressed as a rising density, velocity and complexity of production processes as a whole rather than as an emergent class of expert knowledge workers (Curry 1997). On this view no fundamental changes need necessarily have occurred in economic activity; what we are seeing can be explained as the industrialisation of knowledge production, wherein most knowledge workers cease to be independent craftspeople and are instead employed in teams to contribute their part to a larger work. On this view computer software developers could be regarded as the machinists of the Information Age, 'information mechanics' and not knowledge workers (Curry 1997: 11-12). As Zuboff (1988) stresses, even if learning becomes the new form of labour then all the requisite opportunities for exploitation and alienation remain within the work process.

Problems of Measuring the 'New Economy'

As previously noted knowledge economy advocates are sometimes complacent in employing crude estimates and categories of information workers that allow them to make claims of hyperbolic proportions²⁶. The first clear problem with the discourse's more assertive, positivistic pronouncements are that claims of great developmental accelerations in science and technology are still highly debatable because 'measurements are still very primitive and controversial' (Wionczek 1983: 150). Current statistical measurements are increasingly inadequate for monitoring economic information activities²⁷. No umbrella categories have yet been developed to demarcate the economic contribution of ICTs in themselves for instance, whilst changing organisational structures such as increased inter-firm partnering affect the accountancy of work performed 'in-house' or through informal trading. This same point upon 'the poverty of statistics' (Block 1985: 83, cf. Carter 1996) is made by some knowledge economy proponents in asserting that contemporary measuring techniques *underestimate* the new economy's size and importance. Productivity is

²⁶ Such as that '60 percent of all workers are knowledge workers, and 80 percent of all new jobs are in the information-intensive sector of the economy' (Baroni 2001).

²⁷ Mark Poster (1990, 87) makes the effort and cites data on increases in the training time required to qualify for employment in various occupations as evidence of skill upgrading – the Specific Vocational Preparation Scale (SVP), as used by the US Dictionary of Occupational Tables (DOT) – yet his evidence is still dependent upon quite crude and arbitrary cut-off points such as taking 6 months' training to be a distinguishing mark between high and low-skill work, with no detail upon the significance of this particular date or why it should apply across all economic sectors.

argued to be being continually improved through 'costless quality changes' which mean that national productivity increases qualitatively far more quickly than any measured output in dollars (cf. Castells 2000a, OECD 1987).

A number of organisations are now trying to produce devices for measuring information economy activity. Private initiatives have taken place such as Rubin Systems Inc. and the Meta Group's Global New E-Economy Index (GNEI) and their Cyber Atlas, each of which charts the standing of 47 countries in five categories of 'knowledge jobs, technological innovation, degree of transformation to a digital economy, economic dynamism, and globalization' (META Group 2000, IT Matters 2000, Enos 2000). The World Times and IDC have meanwhile developed the Information Society Index (ISI), which aims to measure 55 nation-states' abilities to participate in the 'information revolution' through monitoring their computer, information, internet and social infrastructures (IDC 2002, Infoshop 2001, WorldPaper 2001). Both systems have very restricted mandates, looking primarily at adoption of ICTs via numbers and power of computers used per head and numbers and speed of internet connections²⁸. Governments are also very keen to produce standardised measurements of the new growth. The OECD (1996b) has produced estimates of the GDP of major OECD economies that is now knowledge-based, working on the basis of a growth in high-technology industries and knowledge-intensive service sectors; whilst the World Bank has produced the programmes and literature that are the focus of this study.

The imperfect means of measuring knowledge's worth to the economy lies at least in part in its particularly relational use-value. Data upon knowledge production and communications tell us very little until we know more about *usage*, including whether and how the knowledge can be applied within an appropriate social and economic context (Kumar 1978). As Roszak (1986: 26-9, 195) puts it, 'information has come to denote whatever can be coded for transmission... regardless of semantic content' and without regard for *who* is communicating with *whom* about *what*. The proliferation of online gaming, spam email and (music or film) file-sharing of the Napster variety can be registered as increasing data transferrals contributing to the information revolution.

²⁸ The ISI is slightly more comprehensive in also including limited consideration of access to other media formats (radio, television, telephones, newspaper readership) as well as school enrolment levels.

A preoccupation with quantitative measures of growth is therefore a matter of concern; 'floods of trivia' might be registered as positive economic indicators when to the contrary they risk producing a disempowering 'infoglut', a 'statistical blizzard that numbs the attention' as it blots out the presence of *useful knowledge* (Roszak 1986: 187-201, cf. Schiller 1996, Koski 2001). Secondly, key occupational categories which acquire more desirable status due to these discursive shifts have been argued to become somewhat elastic. In so doing, the categories become less useful to any statistical exercises designed to measure the 'new economy'. For example, increasing numbers of 'engineers' in society could mask relatively unchanging occupational structures as job-titles are adapted to fit the trend of the day but the jobs themselves remain unaltered should refuse collectors, for instance, be re-titled 'sanitary engineers' (Kumar 1978: 153-4, 214, cf. Webster 1995).

Three similar problems arise with using the service sector as an indicator of knowledge economy developments. Firstly, what expansions there *have* been in the service sector cannot be assumed to indicate the increasing importance of knowledge given that the service sector is something of a residual economic category covering many disparate activities. Considerable further analysis would be required to delineate those elements which demonstrate the increasing importance of knowledge in the contemporary economy. Secondly, it has previously been noted by Krishan Kumar (1978: 200-210) that only the UK's statistics support claims of the declining importance of the industrial economy and correlating rise in the role of the service sector, this being the only country that has ever had a majority of the labour force employed in industry; with regard to the late 1970s, at least, Kumar maintained that in all other countries this sector had shown only marginal decline. Kumar's observations prompt the tentative counter-assertion that the UK's shift is that of a country returning to the international norm after an anomalous period of intensive industrialisation. This does not refute the evidence of marginal change in other countries' economies, but treats it as being of accordingly marginal significance. Finally, statistical complacency is displayed in assuming that increased expenditure on education – the hub of the 'knowledge industry' service sector – can in itself act as an indicator of our entering a new economy or even society (Machlup 1962, Bell 1974). Increases in spending on schools, teachers and textbooks indicate only a priority change reflecting a governmental *response* to discursive trends, a concern to *produce* a more

knowledge-oriented society and *direct* the economy in order to maintain competitiveness in a world perceived as being more knowledge-intensive (Kumar 1978, Webster 1995).

This final point especially highlights one manner in which knowledge economy and society discourse can function within a mode of governmentality, as will be discussed in Chapter Three. To quickly summarise three main points that have brought us towards this interpretation of the discursive turn under review, firstly generality and ambiguity have been noted within this discourse such that its basic premises, in a particular form of expression, are widely accepted to have stood true for all economies and societies (see Section II). Further, problems have been observed with defining and measuring what a knowledge economy or society is or would be that avoids merely calculating the economic gains to be made from applying profit-maximising techniques to incremental increases in existing knowledge, or else speaking of changes that are very difficult to verify. Finally, the possibility has been raised of knowledge society discourse working as an awareness-raising rhetorical tool that cultivates new tendencies within the governed, such as new demands for education and a shift in the locus of responsibility for securing this from the state as provider to the remit of the individual as entrepreneur. In this way the rhetoric of knowledge economies and societies can be seen as playing a performative role in *producing* the economic and social changes discussed here. This raises the question of what ends are being pursued by whom through the parading of this discourse, and the possibilities and dangers therein for different forms of knowledge and ways of knowing, and different forms of economy and ways of acting economically, and thereby for the project of 'development' as considered in Chapter Four. The following section will open up the question of 'whose knowledge' is of concern to a knowledge economy, a question that will recur through the following two chapters in thinking about this discourse in relation to government and development, before we move on to look at the position of the World Bank as a Knowledge Bank within this context.

Whose Knowledge, Whose Economy?

'the least glimmer of truth is conditioned by politics' (Foucault 1990: 5)

As noted, the dominant focus within knowledge economy discourse is upon an accelerating pace in the growth of knowledge. Such an assertion employs a quantitative visualisation of the perceived changes, an understanding of knowledge as an objectified commodity that can be stockpiled, measured and compared over time, as against more qualitative conceptualisations of knowledge's (or society's understanding) improving or maturing. A scientific understanding of formalised and objectified knowledge is dominant within such discourse, the tools for hazarding measurements of the new economy (numbers of articles in journals and books published) fitting well with such a conception (Stehr 2001: 496). Stehr argues that this can be taken as testament to the success of the scientific community (generally conceived) in installing its operative principles as the dominant ones for society as a whole. Yet noting the discourse's predominance within a restricted epistemological terrain also prompts a cautionary response concerning the need to analyse the constellations of interests involved in its performance.

In thinking about the social implications of knowledge economy and society discourse we need to consider the power relations involved in arbitrating the conditions of truth production and thereby the 'rules of formation of statements' (Foucault 1984a 54) which decree how and whether statements can come to be accepted as scientifically true, looking also at how sets of statements come to govern each other such as to create 'regimes' of truth. Viewing the matter in this regard we begin to see that fact construction is a *social* phenomenon. Statements can be made that at first occupy the position of being points of contention, yet through being increasingly referenced and relied upon by others in various contexts a collective process of stabilisation can occur such that they move gradually towards becoming accepted parts of the discursive tapestry. Claims are considered scientific as they become more securely embedded within supporting networks of expert opinion (Latour 1987: 33). In this way truth is at all times conditioned by politics. Knowledge is never an innocent or neutral entity to be simply counted, but always the outcome of, and a further source of, power effects. As well as asking whose knowledge is being emphasised we therefore further need to ask how this might affect different peoples and different ways of knowing. That is, to ask *who is to be attacked and displaced* by knowledge, and especially by

explaining another's knowledge on one's own terms (Latour 1987: 210)²⁹. '[O]rganising our ignorance', as Peter Drucker (1993: 175) says, is the main concern of the knowledge economy. Except that it can be more than this in that the organisation of *our* ignorance can perform the reconstitution of another's knowledge as ignorance (Hobart 1993).

Viewed in this light, more strident critics have lambasted the naivety of 'new' economy enthusiasts on the grounds that the knowledge economy represents an outcome or extension of the contemporary logic of capital accumulation (reproducing knowledge and information as fictitious commodities alongside other factors of production such as labour, Polanyi 1971, 2001, cf. Kumar 1978, Webster 1995, Hardt & Negri 2000, May 2001, Curry 1997). Such commodification would require processes of standardisation to enable knowledge-capital mobility and thus accumulation. This could involve the problematisation of alternative knowledges and their reconstitution as areas awaiting the intervention of the more dominant epistemic approach (Hobart 1993). Alternative knowledge currencies would be translated in this manner and power expressed in the modes and rates of currency conversion that occur. Others have meanwhile argued that knowledge economy developments are a product of state management techniques that will in all likelihood work to consolidate military, economic and political elites' powers (Mosco 1989, Schiller 1996, Roszak 1986, Traber 1986)³⁰, whilst governmental concerns with generalising ICT access and usage act as a distracting focus upon the medium of communication to the exclusion of concerns with the content (Tandon 2001). As can be seen, the suspicion that the knowledge economy could be a conspiratorial hoax designed to reconsolidate the power of an elite is an exaggerated manifestation of concerns with the discourse expressed by a much wider range of authors. All of these concerns highlight the relevance of the politics of knowledge to any analysis of knowledge economic

²⁹ The process of providing an explanation approximates a definition of a power relation for Latour (1987: 157-162). Increasing explanatory power is in turn tantamount to empire-building; accounting for increasing numbers of *explananda* (that to be explained) by employing increasingly fewer *explanans* (that which provides explanation).

³⁰ One of the most commonly cited examples of the military strategies argument is the Cold War providing the incentive for increased research and development of computer technologies which then fed into the consumer market; such as the Internet being an extension of the non-centred computing principles of ARPAnet, designed to maintain military communications and functioning even during a major attack.

developments, and will be given further consideration in the following chapter before any more substantive conclusions are drawn.

Conclusion

As has been illustrated, stronger and weaker links exist between the various developments considered here, but the changes occurring are often overstated and the functionality of bracketing them together as signifying the emergence of a new economy is questionable as an analytical endeavour. These changes do not necessarily cohere in the fashion discussed, nor constitute a rupture with an 'old' economy; rather, they represent a series of progressions along with a few moments of discontinuity. Bruno Latour (1988) has highlighted the need for analysis of such generalised conceptualisations as a knowledge-based or knowledge-intensive economy or society in arguing that what we mean by 'knowledge' can only be understood by examining the conditions and processes through which it is constructed and accumulated.

So in conclusion a restricted understanding of the knowledge economy can be useful, but a critical interpretation of such terminology is necessary; the knowledge economy is not so useful as an analytical tool, but it *has* come to function as a very real mode of governmentality. The knowledge economy produces a combination of governmental hopes and fears and the discourse is being adopted as a mode of governmentality because of these. The reality and nature of the 'growth' of knowledge and its projected social gains require more critical analysis. The following chapter looks at concerns within governmental knowledge economy and society discourse to both shape the 'new' economy and produce and govern new forms of subject which can operate effectively within it, and Chapter Four will then consider the relevance of such discursive practices to the state of contemporary development discourse. The notion of horizontalisation within networked modes of organisation has also been briefly problematised in this chapter, stressing the need for critical analysis of how flows of power concentrate at points and so hierarchical forms become manifest even within relatively more horizontalised organisational structures. This issue will recur in later chapters dealing with the World Bank's adoption of the language of

decentralised networking as a rhetorical turn within its attempts to reproduce itself as a Knowledge Bank.

Taking Control of Knowledge in the 'New Economy'

Introduction

The previous chapter demonstrated that the discourse of information and knowledge economies is appealing in its promise of a new world of opportunities, but suffers from weak evidential backing and flawed conceptual framing. The notion of a new *social* form was shown to be even more problematic. This chapter will consider how the discourse is practised as a mode of governance oriented towards *producing* knowledge economies and thereby fostering the development of knowledge societies. The chapter focuses upon Northern governmental institutions (the United States and European states) and the multilateral bodies through which they act (the European Union, G8 and the OECD), given firstly that the discursive practices of these actors will bear a strong influence over the construction and performance of the 'knowledge revolution' as a socio-economic reality. The fears and hopes expressed within the discursive practice of such actors are outlined before considering its potential for producing new modes of governance, new forms of subject to be governed, and new legal and economic infrastructures. Secondly, the G8 countries also hold substantial voting power in the two main sections of the World Bank Group and are strongly represented in its governance structure (World Bank 2003r, see Chapter Five for more detail). Considering the agendas of these countries helps to situate the state of development discourse considered in the following chapter, as well as setting the scene for the Bank's rhetorical turn towards becoming a Knowledge Bank, the subject of Part Two.

Over the next four sections, several foci of governmental knowledge economy discourse will be addressed; of hopes and fears expressed by governments over the advent of the new economy; of a governmental concern to produce a new subject of governance appropriate to this economy; of the importance of processes of standardisation in enabling governance-at-a-distance in an increasingly globalised economy; and of the role of the private sector and the institution of intellectual

property rights in the consolidation of 'new economy' developments. The combination of hopes and fears expressed, and the agency exercised to resolve these, illustrate the importance of performing and shaping discursive changes through their practise. Further, as will be seen, the performance of these discursive changes by largely the same assemblages of actors tend to produce patterns of repetition, with institutional changes occurring only incrementally. The dominant contemporary governmental knowledge economy discursive practice is argued to represent to a large extent an intensification and extension of longer-term shifts in the privatisation of knowledge and information as forms of capital; in contemporary societies knowledge grows where capital flows as investments in research and development are shaped by the concern to produce returns on capital. International knowledge structures are argued to frame whose knowledge 'counts' and thereby partially determine winning and losing positions in the new economy. Such developments, pursued unmoderated, will tend to exacerbate and entrench international inequalities and divisions of labour. In this context an alternative conception of the knowledge economy is finally briefly considered which is argued to widen knowledge production and sharing opportunities, and thereby serve certain ends of 'development' (raising standards of living, enhancing freedoms) as considered in the next chapter. The purpose of this chapter is not to assert an *either* over an *or* however, but rather to encourage recognition of the contextually specific advantages and disadvantages pertaining to different knowledge *economies*. The presence of this model (and its contemporary interaction with the dominant discourse) further demonstrates the space that exists for alternative contributions to the open and underdetermined terrain of knowledge economy practices.

Leapfrogging Hopes and Fears in the Knowledge Revolution

'Stories are the secret reservoir of values: change the stories individuals or nations live by and tell themselves, and you change the individuals and nations.' (Okri 1996: 21)

We shall deal firstly with how the idea that we are living and working through a *knowledge revolution* is now securely embedded within governance discourse, using a set of interchangeable references in the manner of the materials considered in the previous chapter (knowledge, information, and learning economies and societies, see

for instance G8 2000, OECD 2001a, European Union 1994, 1996). A proliferation of organisations, task forces, charters and international agreements have been established to define, produce and direct the perceived changes which overlap with the perceived threats and opportunities of concerns brought under the banner of 'globalisation'. Under this banner a new economy is posited wherein countries experience vulnerability to flows of speculative financial capital and the need to attract investment capital that can scan the world economy as well as increasing global economic interdependence and the rising importance of the service sector and corresponding decline of manufacturing in industrialised countries (OECD 2001a). 'Knowledge economy' developments such as increasing computing power and scientific innovation are seen as enabling these changes (G8 1999, DOT Force 2001). The convergence and rapid development of information systems, telecommunications and broadcasting technologies in the form of information communication technologies (ICTs) form the main concern of such documentation. A clear bias is shown towards dealing with Internet-related aspects of the knowledge economy as something provoking fear, fascination and hope (UK 1998a, 1998b, G8 1999, European Union 1997, New Zealand 1999). The Internet lends itself easily to dizzying statements upon the accelerating production and proliferation of knowledge in cited numbers of users, websites posted and data transferrals conducted online.

The manner in which the knowledge economy is invoked within the discourse is revealing, especially in light of the concluding remarks in the previous chapter. Some documentation reflects upon how distinctive aspects of a knowledge-driven economy are becoming increasingly central to all industries and services, stressing that we are not facing the arrival of a new economy so much as a shift in the dominant mode of organisation and the rising use of ICTs (Blair 2000b). Many thus refer to the knowledge economy as a goal or process rather than an actuality, stressing an agentive role for these institutions in negotiating a common set of understandings of changes headlined under the banner of the 'knowledge economy' and then working to *produce* knowledge economies³¹. These comments lend themselves to the previous

³¹ For example, the Okinawa Charter on the Global Information Society (G8 2000), an outcome of the G8 Kyushu-Okinawa Summit in July 2000, stresses the task as being 'to stimulate and facilitate the transition to an information society' whilst the UK DTI's Converging Technologies (1998a) talks of needing to 'create a knowledge-driven economy'. The 2001 Digital Opportunity Task Force Report (DOT Force 2001), another product of the Kyushu-Okinawa Summit, further emphasises the need to

chapter's understanding of the knowledge economy as becoming reified through discursive practice as links are drawn between technological and organisational changes and given weight in governmental activities so as to further accelerate processes of change.

Leapfrogging has become a common term in the discourse of the World Bank and others in the contemporary governmental and developmental terrains (E.g. G8 2000, UK 2000b, OECD 2001c, South Africa 1996, Dahlman 2002, Braga 1995, World Bank 2002n, 2002p, 1998a, BBC 2002b, Annan 2000, Pommier 2001). Leapfrogging means skipping key stages of industrial development to move straight into an age of hi-tech consumption and production for hi-tech markets. Technologies which are being developed and trialled in more industrialised countries could, it is argued, be implemented in developing countries with no institutional or technological sloth stemming from the need to uninstall and abandon older technologies. Countries could bypass analogue networks and buy straight into fully digitised systems for instance, or use mobile communications technologies rather than waiting whilst effective landline telecommunications infrastructures are established (Braga 1998, UN 1999, South Africa 1997). It is not just the South that is positioned to leapfrog however, but all relatively excluded zones; for example the UK government has a website devoted to leapfrogging as an 'Information Age' initiative for Northern Ireland (<http://www.leapfrog.gov.uk>). Leapfrogging could be seen as a new perspective on development in encouraging the bypassing of industrialisation. Since the establishment of development as a major discourse in the middle of the last century, 'developed' and 'developing' and 'industrialised' and 'industrialising' have been used as almost interchangeable referents. This emphasis upon the production and consumption of hi-tech goods and services illustrates at the least an interest in getting developing countries up-to-speed with, and adopting a role in, the knowledge economy. As we will see in the next chapter, the next brand of discursive referents could describe countries as being more and less 'informationalised' and 'informationalising'.

Deployed in too casual a manner, leapfrogging can begin to seem like the futurism described in the previous chapter. Whilst the term 'leapfrogging' is not necessarily

futuristic in itself, it is at least a form of discourse that needs to be used with great caution. The ability to 'leapfrog' will depend upon the congruence of (the continuing interconnection between) a number of complex conditions (regarding the interdependence of many aspects of national economic and governmental infrastructures). It will further require appropriate training of all those who are intended to use the new technologies if they are to be put to effective use. The social context of leapfrogging will also be important, technologies perhaps requiring practices and norms of operation quite new to the context into which they are introduced. As such, each instance of leapfrogging will require careful negotiation and planning, and perhaps pre-emptive training and adjustment. The danger of speaking broadly of the promises of 'leapfrogging' is that it can distract from the difficulties and potential problems thereof, and encourage insufficiently planned investments in new technologies that drain resources from other developmental endeavours and produce poor returns (Davison et al. 2000).

Leapfrogging could work to ensure greater social and economic inclusion or simply to secure stable market conditions within the parameters of a new global economy, safeguarding a sufficient supply of primary labour sources and cheap technological products from the South, and demand for the products of Northern country knowledge economy initiatives. There is a felt ambivalence in the governmental literature in this regard. The G8 Okinawa Charter (2000) and the related DOT Force documentation (2001), for instance, list a series of central hopes for the impact of ICTs including more direct economic markers (increasing ICT connectivity and access, lowering ICT costs, building human capital and encouraging participation in the online economy) alongside grander but more insubstantial human development notions (enhancing sustainable economic growth and public welfare, promoting democracy, transparency, social cohesion and human rights and fostering cultural diversity and international peace and stability). Both the Charter and DOT Force stress principles of cooperation and inclusion in bridging the international information, knowledge and digital divides, the Charter invoking the language of rights in insisting that 'everyone should be able to enjoy access to information and communication networks'. This gesture of universal human interest and magnanimity is then grounded in the self-economic interest of stimulating the transition of *all* to an information society, enabling developing countries to *leapfrog* and ensuring G8 countries are amongst those

reaping the 'economic, social and cultural benefits' of their doing so. The OECD (2001a) similarly stresses that closing the digital divide for developing countries will promote growth for *all* those in the network including OECD countries themselves (cf. UNESCO 1996).

It is relevant in this regard to note differences in tone between the literature of the Northern-based multilaterals and that of individual national governments, the tone of government literature often being more distinctly anxious and self-concerned. Government literature tends to frame the new developments as a unique opportunity for strengthening their position in the global economy, as well as outlining three closely-related potential threats. Many express a fear firstly of not being able to shape these changes to their advantage and so losing out on potential benefits, stressing the need for countries to become more active participants in producing and consuming technological change so as to try and take the lead in new developments (e.g. UK 1998b). A commonly voiced fear is of losing trained talent to competitors offering more fulfilling and financially rewarding work - to suffer brain drain and 'for the citizens of more successful countries, in the words of one New Zealand government paper (1999: 2, 33)³². This fear is frequently conjoined with an expressed desire to attract trained immigrants and therefore to be the beneficiaries of brain-drain, experiencing its counterpart brain-*gain*. A second related concern is that of losing competitive advantage and thus economic activity to the fastest rising amongst the 'developing' countries, work which does not require a specially trained workforce being outsourced to countries where labour is cheaper (New Zealand 1999). One outcome of this could be job losses for industrialised countries and a downward pressure on wages internationally. Thirdly there is a fear of experiencing cultural obsolescence in an increasingly globalised economy should the national culture and language become marginalised with the globalisation of communications media and in particular the dominance of the English language and of American culture through this (Greece 1999, New Zealand 1999). The counterpart hope attached to ICT developments is that of using the Internet as an opportunity to widen citizens' access to a country's cultural capital (Denmark 1996).

³² Why being primarily an amusement park and holiday land should be a bad thing if it brings in sufficient revenues to allow the polity's functioning is never explicitly stated, but we may presume that problems would be perceived with the economy existing primarily in a service role, and therefore occupying a more peripheral and unstable position within the international economy.

Northern-country governments are therefore keen to obtain a leading position within the new economy as it unfolds; to create the most effective (fast, secure) ICT networks and become the choicest locations for e-commerce; to lead in Internet technology and content development; to become the main drivers of growth in the new economy; and to pioneer forms of effective regulation (online security, IPR protection) for an age of instant global communications (Greece 1999, New Zealand 1999, UK 1998b). Governments fearing linguistic or cultural marginalisation are further engaging in programmes to make use of globalisation trends and ICT developments in marketing a country 'brand' and culture 'products' to the world's consumers, and trying to secure the existence of language character sets in future hardware and software developments (New Zealand 1999, Denmark 1996, Greece 1999, France 1999)³³. Such efforts are ongoing with many other subnational languages in an effort to reduce cyber-exclusion, as for instance with the Kannada language of the Southern Indian state of Karnataka (Noronha 2001). The UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) is a Southern multilateral voice paralleling these concerns. In *Africa and the Information Economy* (UNECA 2000: iii-ix) it refers to the dangers of brain drain, but also the hopes for capitalising upon the 'brain gain' possibilities inherent within the African 'intellectual Diaspora'³⁴, and stresses the need to ensure that local languages are represented online and indigenous African knowledge is drawn upon in playing 'proactively' in the new economy, making the Internet more relevant to people so as to encourage participation. So the hopes and fears of leapfrogging in the knowledge economy can be seen to be a concern of all countries, North and South, as regards their 'development' in the sense of economic growth and positioning within the global economy. The concerns of these countries, all (at least symbolically) creditors and many also borrowers of the World Bank, and each with (however dominant or marginal) a say in the governance of the

³³ With reference to this latter point, see comments upon ASCII and Unicode in Chapter 1.

³⁴ Castells (2000: 128-9) has relatedly argued that 'brain circulation' is more prevalent than the brain drain many governments both fear and hope to benefit from, referring to two points. He refers firstly to statistics indicating increasing trends in foreign nationals getting PhDs in the US before returning to their home country; and secondly the diffusion of research and production around the world through network enterprises. Castells too easily dismisses serious structural inequalities such as this 'global' science being predominantly monolingual (English), although he recognises the problem that Northern interests and institutions prevail in defining problems and appropriate methodologies for their resolution such that Western science reproduces exclusion of large numbers of the world's population 'by not treating their problems, or by not treating them in terms which could yield results leading to improvement in their living conditions'. This is a point to which this chapter argues in looking at both knowledge production and also the legal infrastructures being established around knowledge's possession.

organisation, provide some first indication of the context within which the Bank first began to engage seriously with knowledge economy discourse.

Shaping the Citizenry: Education and Responsibilisation

'Knowledge and skills, creativity and innovation, adaptability and entrepreneurship are the ways by which the winners will win in the new economy.' (Blair 2000a)

A second major focus of governmental knowledge economy literature concerns cultivating tendencies within the governed apposite to the production of a competitive economy (e.g. OECD 1996, cf. Rose 1999, Hardt & Negri 2000, Castells 1997). With the national economy being seen increasingly as functioning as a node in a global network, in line with the neoliberal trends in governmental practices, the focus of national governance has shifted away from welfare provision (argued to be unviable in an era of global capital flows) towards providing a capital-friendly environment with minimal intervention in economic affairs. The make-up of the populace as citizens, consumers and workers is central to a country's appeal to mobile capital. Government concerns tend therefore to be threefold, aimed at producing the knowledge producers and managers, producing knowledgeable citizens, and producing a technologically and numerically-literate citizenry. The overall concern could be branded as that of seeking to 'transform non-participants in the information society into participating citizens' (Barry 2001: 91).

A central concern in government papers is firstly with how knowledge, skills and creativity have become core forms of value-adding capital, key factors of production (e.g. Brown 2000, Denmark 1996, France 1999). It therefore becomes a governmental problem to ensure the production of the economy's *knowledge producers and managers*, equipping the citizenry with the skills they require if the economy is to be internationally competitive (European Union 1997: iii, cf. Hardt & Negri 2000: 32). Education thus becomes a central policy arena for enabling the diffusion of knowledge, cultivating the skills necessary for its productive application, and raising awareness amongst the citizenry about the importance of knowledge in contemporary society. Fostering partnerships between universities and the private sector is treated as a matter of priority in order firstly to tailor educational institutions

towards the needs of industry, producing more readily employable knowledge and workers (Scotland 1999, Greece 1999, OECD 1996, DOT Force 2001). It is secondly seen as being useful for acquiring funding for the further expansion of higher education and strengthening of national research networks whilst maintaining level or reducing public expenditure on education. Knowledge production in this way is brought under the influence of capital interests, encouraging the likelihood of research agendas and education as a whole becoming more oriented towards capital returns potential. Given the presumption of an increasing pace of change, lifelong learning is also prioritised in the hope of maintaining an adequately trained workforce and fostering an enthusiastic approach to adaptation and innovation (Denmark 1996, Greece 1999, OECD 1996, 2001a).

There is a felt need for governments secondly to produce *knowledgeable citizens* (apposite to the 'knowledgeable society', Lane 1966: 649) who can operate within and develop a culture which welcomes and promotes entrepreneurial approaches to the production and use of knowledge. The notion of a knowledge-friendly *society* would function as a framing device to foster the growth of a competitive knowledge *economy*, as mentioned in Chapter Two, emphasising that a new era and not just a new economic phase is being spoken of. Through this, knowledge discourse might filter more deeply into other social discourses in a way that helps promote the citizenry's acceptance of responsibility for retraining and marketing themselves to potential employers in a more knowledge-oriented environment. Governments, it is argued, need to foster a culture of enterprise and an entrepreneurial spirit both within themselves and throughout society, as well as informing citizens of how to foster within *themselves* such an approach, so as to unleash 'the full potential of people ... establishing the work ethic for the whole of society' (Blair 2000a, cf. Blair 2000b, 1998: 5, UK 1998b: 15).

On this view governments should channel energies into cultivating entrepreneurial and technological conceptions of citizenship through 'an endless emphasis on education and on skills' (Blair 2000a). The UK paper *Our Competitive Future* (UK 1998b: 17, 25, 37), for example, outlines a path to pursue this through a range of endeavours aimed at a variety of audiences, such as providing enterprise awareness training for teachers, establishing enterprise centres at universities, and producing an online Enterprise Zone for businesses. A shift in emphasis away from welfare

provision and the maintenance of relative equity can be felt in this reproduction of citizens as responsibilised entrepreneurs (Rose 1999: 145-154). Through such a shift roles previously occupied by the state can be relocated within the citizenry, who are expected to market their skills in an entrepreneurial fashion to flexibilised job-markets, to monitor and insure themselves, and to provide privately for ill health and old age. The responsibilised citizen can cultivate their freedom through improving their economic position at the same time as they enhance the national economy (Rose 1999, cf. Frissen 1997, Barry 2001, Nielsen 1996)³⁵. Anecdotal examples of these changes from the UK might include the rebranding of the unemployed as 'job seekers' (Rose 1999) who must perform their entrepreneurial spirit to an appropriate official at regular intervals to be eligible for state help; the rebranding of many libraries as 'learning centres', spaces of opportunity (and not merely repositories of texts) providing free access to the Internet as part of the People's Network initiative (<http://www.peoplesnetwork.gov.uk>); and the provision and heavy promotion of lifelong learning training and opportunities through initiatives such as 'Learn Direct' (UK 2003).

Governments need finally to produce *technologically and numerically-literate citizenries* who can participate in their own governance by engaging with the abundance of knowledge produced in the process of government, monitoring and governing themselves by the numbers that make modern large-scale governance possible (e.g. population statistics, economic statistics, risk assessments, and so forth, Rose 1991). It has been argued that a distinct governmental layer of knowledge managers is then necessary to consolidate and validate this valuable resource, meaning that politicians become merely the friendly public face for an increasingly expertise-based system of government (Castells 2000).

³⁵ As Castells (2000a) notes, an entrepreneurial process can be enabling for professional workers trading skills-in-demand. However the danger is that for a great number of people increased insecurity and stress will be the more likely effects of this entrepreneurial discourse, promoting social dissolution and undermining the proclaimed benefits of knowledge developments. When social problems and the responsibility for their resolution are placed within an individual's life-frame, the freedom and welfare of those without capital to draw upon (financial, intellectual, social, etc.) can be dramatically curtailed. Yet a learning economy requires a conducive learning environment inclusive of a certain degree of social cohesion and felt economic security. Widening social exclusion could thus undermine the benefits of any positive trends in lifelong learning and innovation (Hodgson 1999, Livingstone 1999, Foray & Lundvall 1996, Neef 1998).

Yet elected politicians within modern mass democracies have only ever been one facet of much more extended systems of government requiring producers, managers and distributors of information and knowledge. What is more distinctive about these changes is that contemporary governmental institutions express a concern for citizens *themselves* to become knowledge managers, relating to the information produced in the system's functioning so as to avoid increasing the distance between governors and governed. There exists a close interrelationship between quantification (e.g. the production of statistics) and the perception of transparency within democratic government. Such quantification produces a political space in that numbers and their contestation are a resource of all parties, framing and informing civic discourse (Rose 1991). A commonly expressed hope within the governmental literature is that ICTs will enable the establishment of a teledemocracy infrastructure which strengthens government-citizen relations; increasing the availability of relevant information and improving state-citizen interaction; and widening governments' access to information through increased participation and feedback into the political system (OECD 2001b, cf. Brown 2000, New Zealand 1999, OECD 1997, UNESCO 1996, Keskinen 2001).

Governance and Development at a Distance In a Knowledge Economy

The third of the governmental discursive foci in relation to the knowledge economy outlined in the Introduction can be understood as a response to the concern that economic activities are moving beyond standard systems of measurement and control. The proliferation of knowledge economy discourse problematises the roles of governance institutions with changing social forms, modes of economic organisation, and technologies for exercising and avoiding governance. As argued in the previous section, the governance of large populations and the management of the state machinery have always depended upon the ability to gather, produce and process information and knowledge (Giddens 1985, Rose 1991), as well as the ability to define, measure and regulate economic activities within set borders and to negotiate economic relations between the designated territory and others. An inability to perform any of these functions would undermine a state's claims to governmental authority. Attempts at informational control at the individual state level are argued to be becoming less effective in an age of instant and relatively unregulated global communications (Castells 1997). The perceived reality of such arguments has

resulted in a double concern with producing increasingly technicised *procedures* and increasingly globalised *modes* of government as evidenced by multilateral bodies' concerns with 'e-governance' or 'Governance On-Line (GOL)' (DOT Force 2001, G8 1999, cf. OECD 1997).

Firstly with regard to procedures of governance and the increasing role of information and knowledge in shaping the political, the management of knowledge structures can function as a tool of governance shaping political spaces, determining 'what knowledge is discovered, how it is stored, and who communicates it by what means to whom and on what terms' (Strange 1988: 121). The phrase 'knowledge structures' refers to the defined conditions for making satisfactory knowledge claims, relating to the methodologies used in research and the means of extrapolating conclusions and presenting results. Dominant knowledge structures will influence the manner in which questions are framed and thus the areas that are problematised for research, and the limits around defining areas of 'valid' discourse. When effective this process can redraw the boundaries of objectivity and spaces of political debate by technicising much of politics in a manner promising its depoliticisation (cf. Rose 1991)³⁶. Secondly in thinking about globalised modes of governance, the standardisation of knowledge and information structures can be seen as a political process (Strange 1988) enabling the extension of a territory of governance to areas whose distinctness was previously maintained through the use of different procedural norms producing incompatible understandings. Standardised information and knowledge production will thus facilitate more globalised modes of governance. The growth of understanding about a global economy can be seen as resulting from exercises in constructing globally networked 'centres of calculation' (Latour 1987: 215-257) using standardised means of production.

Given their well-resourced presence in each member country, multilateral bodies are often well-placed to gather data internationally and develop such centres. These are primarily established to enable the organisation to act at a distance given that they require harmonised information sources to facilitate the construction and mapping of

³⁶ There is then the danger that societies are drawn further away from transparent democratic functioning as issues are defined out of the political arena and clashes of interest go unmonitored between technical experts, the arena they occupy at a professional level so as to have developed their expertise, and the role they adopt within governmental knowledge production and evaluation (e.g. see Monbiot 2000: 208-224).

their territories' properties. The organisation can then be effective in producing, organising and disseminating knowledge and information, and given the stake that each member country has in it, it can furthermore be influential in setting informational standards for others, defining appropriate means of producing and organising such. Through this standardisation process holistic explanatory frameworks may be constructed which function as tools of more global economic governance³⁷. If practices relating to knowledge economy discourse are then engaged, its effects will be reified at a global level in the manner of Callon's (1999: 192, cf. 1998: 27-28) understanding that economics *performs* the economy. Standardisation, a concern of governments in managing their capacity to exercise governance, is therefore similarly a concern for the World Bank. As will be seen in Part Two, this concern becomes manifest as a will to extend the remit of its own governance at a distance and the smooth flow of knowledge within the organisation so as to increase its effectivity. It secondly becomes manifest through problematising the roles and aims of national development agencies and development NGOs, translating their interests into a format corresponding to its work. The Bank already occupies a central position as a source of authoritative knowledge upon economic development, its intellectual influence being mediated through its economic leverage with borrower governments, its considerable research budgets, and the high profile given to its reports by the media as well as educational and governmental institutions (Berger and Beeson 1998). Through these strengths it can play an important role in shaping development discourse and ensuring it is positioned more centrally to the concerns of its member governments and other development actors as a provider of knowledge about the 'new' economy.

The Private Sector and Intellectual Property Rights

The fourth major focus of knowledge economy governance is upon fostering a productive relationship between the state and the private sector to encourage the development of a national comparative advantage in the global knowledge economy, much as was noted in the changes to education provision above. This focus is twofold, oriented towards laying the foundations for new economic initiatives using the

³⁷ There are close parallels here with Hardt and Negri's (2000: xi – xiii) conception of Empire wherein sovereignty takes on 'a new form, composed of a series of national and supranational organisms united under a single logic of rule'.

Internet and other ICT developments, and to producing national regulatory systems and a harmonised international legal framework defining and protecting intellectual property rights (IPRs), in an attempt to secure the continuity of established principles of capital regulation through the advent of thinking about knowledge as capital (Denmark 1996, France 1999, European Union 1994, G8 2000).

Stress is placed firstly upon the private sector's being a leading player in the development and use of ICT networks and expressed in the concern to promote the internationalisation and securitisation of e-commerce (ICT-based commercial transactions). A strong focus is placed upon harmonising, deregulating and liberalising national telecommunications industries and regulations governing the Internet and online commerce on the presumption that this will foster competition and lower prices, improve services and promote innovation. The central principles of the Okinawa Charter (G8 2000) and much other documentation involve applying processes of liberalisation to any products or services even loosely associated with the new economy, and harmonising and minimising the impact of other regulatory systems (Denmark 1996, Greece 1999, Clinton & Gore 1997, OECD 2001a, European Union 1994, 1996).

A number of writers have argued that the discursive practice of the knowledge economy is an exercise in maintaining or gaining comparative advantage over other countries. The US has been argued to have developed its competitive edge in the information field to consolidate and safeguard the country's economic and military dominance, the push for free trade in the information and service sectors potentially compensating for its declining competitive position in the industrial sector and its increasing dependence upon imports (Strange 1988, Elam 1999, Lehman 1998, Joffe 1997, Hardt & Negri 2000, cf. Barry 2001). In this context it is significant that Northern governments are at the forefront of pushing to extend service sector liberalisation in all WTO member countries including those in the South through the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) of the World Trade Organization (WTO) given that it is these countries that are sensing most strongly the service sector's growth as an economic force. Opening poorer countries up to international competition would make it cheaper in a narrowly-defined short-run for them to use imported Northern services and technologies sold on loss-leading introductory promotional offers, discouraging the development of domestic competition.

Technological lock-in (the fact that it is frequently cheaper to upgrade existing technologies than to re-invest in entirely new ones) along with the 'information umbrella' effect this encourages – when a country's producers are provided with market incentives to ensure that their technologies remain mutually compatible, encouraging users locked in to one technology to choose subsequent products from the same supplier country (Strange 1988: 135-6) – would then secure future markets for Northern products as they become hybridised into national systems. Through this dominance less technologically-advanced states could become more dependent upon Northern economic organisations, with further consequent effects upon their relations with Northern political institutions. For instance, all Internet access is based upon the provision of international server engines and telecommunications networks. Whole countries can be cut off from the Internet from the outside if the multinational companies which provide these networks terminate the service at their own instigation or that of the countries in which they have their main base³⁸. Northern dominance in the satellite systems technologies that enable swift global communication, media transmission and surveillance can thus function in maintaining developing countries' dependence upon keeping favour with Northern political institutions.

The stratification of relatively powerful and powerless groups within a globalised informational economy will depend increasingly upon who is doing the transmitting and who the receiving of information, and OECD countries transmit disproportionately more information than they receive (Lash & Urry 1994). The Internet research organisation NUA (2001a) cited sources in 2001 finding that 72.3% of Americans use the Internet³⁹ and made an 'educated guess' that as of August 2001, over 93% (479.3m) of Internet users were based in Europe, North America and the Asia/Pacific region; whilst Latin America accounted for under 5% (25.33m), and Africa and the

³⁸ This was the case for Somalia in November 2001 when AT&T and British Telecom shut off the international gateways they provided to the country's only Internet company and its main telecommunications service provider (the Somali Internet Company and Al-Barakaat) at the initiative of the US government in its drive to close funding avenues for the Al-Queda network. Al-Barakaat was also an informal financial transfer network upon which many Somali's depended for money from relatives abroad (and in which the Internet Company was a holding partner). The US government accused al-Barakaat of acting as a source of 'terrorist' funds transfers. By January 2002 a new company had been established providing an Internet service, but potentially huge effects could stem from this isolation of such a fragile economy during these two months (BBC 2001, 2002a).

³⁹ With Miami having 'more Internet capacity into Latin America than any Latin American city does, making it an "absentee Internet infrastructure capital" for the region' (NUA 2001a).

Middle East each accounted for less than 1% of these users (NUA 2001b)⁴⁰. Susan Strange (1998) has stated that all states are increasingly competing in this field as *power passes to the information rich more than to the capital rich*. Whilst this usefully points to the importance of the informational changes that are occurring, such bold statements risk over-emphasising the changes taking place. The possession of financial, industrial and informational capitals being so intertwined, it is more productive to contemplate the development of informational capital into a serious governmental concern than to stress ambiguous notions of relative dominance between capital forms.

The second point of emphasis in terms of the relationship between state and private sector concerns securing the continuity of established principles of capital regulation through the growing role of new forms of capital and the conditions that apply to it, and harmonising the continuity of these principles within the international economy. How knowledge is constructed as a form of capital, and how markets in the trade of this capital are produced, will have important effects upon all countries. The outcomes of these areas of contestation will shape whose knowledge and information 'currencies' are traded, how interchangeable these currencies are seen to be, and thus their relative desirability.

One dominant trend within governmental discourse upon the knowledge economy is concerned with knowledge production in the recognised measurable form of patents registered, an activity currently dominated by Northern countries (WIPO 2000)⁴¹. Patenting throughout the world is mostly based around the US patenting system, which is the priority country for the majority of international patent families (Rausch

⁴⁰ The estimated world total of users in 2001 (NUA 2001b) was 513.41 million, with Africa quoted at 4.15m and the Middle East at 4.65m. The OECD (2001a) quoted similar inequalities for Internet usage in 1996.

⁴¹ Patent authorities in the US and Japan registered well over 50,000 patents in 2000 (157,496 and 125,880 respectively), with five other countries (Germany, UK, Republic of Korea, France and Italy) registering between 20,000 and 50,000, and ten more (Sweden, Spain, Switzerland, Australia, Netherlands, Belgium, China, the Russian Federation, Canada and Austria) registering over 10,000 (WIPO 2000). Thus of the twenty countries registering the most patents (including Denmark, Portugal and Greece with between 6,000 and 8,000 each), the only three that would be officially recognised as being in the broadest sense 'developing' (i.e. would previously have been classed as 'Second' and 'Third' World) are China, the Russian Federation, and the Republic of Korea. Each of these countries is further strongly distinguished from the 'developing' countries of South America and Africa through being associated either with the Newly-Industrialising 'Asian Tigers' (the Republic of Korea) or else with making a transition from communist towards capitalist operational economic principles.

1999)⁴². Consolidating and harmonising these legal frameworks for staking claims to knowledge ownership is a major governmental concern (see e.g. G8 2000: 12, OECD 1996: 32, European Union 1994, 1997, UK 1998b, France 1999, Greece 1999), and the shape of the new economy will depend upon the enforcement of these knowledge-appropriation structures by both national and multilateral governance institutions. The construction of an internationally standardised legal framework for the ownership and trading of knowledge and information through the recognition and enforcement of patent claims is at present placed primarily in the hands of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) under the remit of its Trade-related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement⁴³. In the WTO's (2000) words, 'Intellectual property rights are the rights given to persons over the creations of their minds' through a combination of copyright, trademarks and geographical location names, and patents upon inventions, designs and trade secrets.

The patenting of life-forms indigenous to developing countries which has become an issue in recent years illustrates how knowledge 'growth' can be produced through the translation of elements within more marginal systems of understanding into products within the formalised proprietary framework, often to then be appropriated by the translator. These patents range from the synthetisation of naturally occurring chemical combinations found in plants, primarily for medical purposes; through the Green Revolution-era patenting of 'improved' crop varieties; to the current trend for

⁴² An international patent family is a set of patents covering the same ground which hold across more than one country; to be the priority country means that the country was the location of the first patent application. Rausch (1999), on the basis of data extracted and developed from the Derwent World Patents Index Database, argues that the US held this role for 63% of families established in 1990-1994. Brian Kahin (2001) argues that US patenting structures exhibit an expansionist philosophy. The institutional structure in the US, he says, favours the granting of patents over their refusal through, for example, giving employee-bonuses in patenting offices for patents approved; having a legal structure that carries a strong presumption as to patents' validity; and imposing potentially high costs upon patent-challengers that encourage settlements even when the patent's validity is doubted. He further notes a rising trend in conceptual patents upon business practices in the US, arguing that these will soon be brought into the international patent family arena.

⁴³ The World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO 1998) was also mandated in 1998 to analyse the intellectual property aspects of traditional knowledge and folklore, to allow stakeholders in these forms of knowledge to gain protection, although its research and pronouncements gain little wider attention unlike the WTO's activities. Both the WTO and WIPO are UN bodies, but the WTO is argued by civil society critics to be much more dominated by Northern interests through its paperwork-heavy bureaucratic structure incapacitating countries that cannot afford to send a large delegation of representatives, the influence large Northern corporations wield upon government representatives, and the 'closed-door' negotiations that allow 'arm-twisting' (linking trade deals to other aspects of Northern-country foreign policy including debt relief) to determine weaker country's decisions (Bello 1999). See for instance the work of the World Development Movement (<http://www.wdm.org.uk>), and FOCUS on the Global South (<http://www.focusweb.org>).

staking claims based upon minor genetic alterations, or simply for having mapped out a genetic code⁴⁴. Patenting crop 'improvements' or genetic maps in this way disregards 'property' claims based on tacit or community-based knowledge developed over generations of careful experimentation and interbreeding, treating it as a raw material for the application of Western principles of scientific knowledge-creation. Patenting life upon this basis reveals a very Lockean approach to property claims (see Locke 1988); it is as though to say that those who currently work these resources are not utilising them to their full extent (not maximising capital returns), and so they are open to proprietorial claims by any who will employ them *more* productively. In such cases we deal not with a growth in knowledge but rather with the translation of a flow resource (tacit knowledge) into a stock resource (formalised knowledge). Aspects of current systems at the forefront of the 'expansion' of knowledge are reminiscent of Rousseau's (1984: 43) founder of civil society who simply encloses a piece of the common land and claims it as his own, except that in this case the affected peoples will not need to be 'simple enough to believe' because an international legal infrastructure will guarantee the rights of the claimant (cf. May 2001).

If embedding statements within supporting networks of opinion is treated as an important element in the construction of facts (Latour 1987), then the dominance of patenting systems can be seen as strengthening specific epistemological conditions for the production of truths on an international level and weakening the perceived validity of alternative understandings. To assert in the neutral manner of Nico Stehr (2001) noted in the previous chapter that this is testament merely to the success of the scientific community in installing its operative principles as the dominant ones of society seems more problematic once the interweaving of epistemological and economic power effects are taken into account. Whilst true up to a point, the embedding of these scientific principles as the dominant *global* principles of knowledge production is ultimately dependent upon the connections developed

⁴⁴ RiceTec Inc's attempt to patent 'basmati rice' in 1997 is one of the highest profile of such cases of what has been termed 'biopiracy' (Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology 2001). RiceTec's Basmati rice claims have apparently survived in only a very restricted form after the Indian government contested the case and sought to extend TRIPS legislation on the geographical specificity of wines and spirits names to other products. The Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology (2001) state that from an originally open-ended patent, RiceTec has given up 15 of its 20 claims and now has stakes only in particular varieties of rice specifically bred up by RiceTec not making unconditional claims on the name 'Basmati'.

between scientific knowledge production and the returns made upon capital invested in its production. Given the increasingly technical nature of contemporary scientific research, producing knowledge in a patented form becomes an ever-more expensive process. Knowledge will tend to 'grow' only where capital flows as investments in research and development are shaped by considering their capital returns potential. Resources for the purpose will be concentrated at points, and it is through the networking of these points that facts will become established. Such networks will exhibit affiliations and biases which affect the treatment of claims made from their exterior. Claims congruent with the dominant direction of research pursued will become established (validated, distributed and collectively stabilised) with far greater speed and efficacy than could dissenting claims. Alternative knowledges, and thereby alternative knowledge economies and alternative approaches to 'developing' economies and societies, could in this way be marginalised to the sidelines of the 'new' economy⁴⁵.

Winners and Losers In the Knowledge Revolution

Following this line of argument, we can see that the winners in the new economy will be those quickest to draw up patents, and well-resourced and well-networked enough to ensure that decisions turn in their favour. There is thus a danger, however small, that the formalisation of tacit Southern knowledges into patented Northern knowledge will produce new channels of South-North financial capital transfer and so cultivate new forms of dependency⁴⁶. Developing knowledge-*producing* capacity is thus seen as a central aspect of development under the new economic conditions (Miller 2001,

⁴⁵ In much the same way that Stephen Marglin (1990) argues that managerial forms of knowledge have for so long dominated, and absorbed, the insights of applied workers' knowledge.

⁴⁶ For instance, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) holds patents on Terminator Technologies (seeds which produce only one generation of crop) and has stated that its priorities lie with developing these technologies for commercial purposes, considering farmers' rights to harvest and re-sow multiple generations of altered seed to be incompatible with respect for intellectual property rights. These developments threaten to squeeze out subsistence economies and extend the dominance of industrial-scale agribusiness producing for international markets. Whilst much media attention was given to the US-based MNC Monsanto's announcement in October 1999 that it was abandoning its Terminator Technology plans, this gesture only resulted from the failure of a proposed merger between Monsanto and Delta and Pine Land, Inc. which is a partner with USDA in the Terminator patents. The Rural Advancement Foundation International (RAFI 1999) cites seven other corporations and institutions holding such patents, indicating a general interest in the profitable potential of such technologies. Even outside of the Terminator Technology debate, many farmers are today already *contractually* bound to seed suppliers not to store and plant any seed from GM crops they harvest, illustrating that the technology is an enforcement mechanism for a legal norm in GM seed markets (Tokar 1999, Pascual & Scott 2001, St. Louis Business Journal 2001, Raj 1998, RAFI 2001, BBC 1999, CNN 1999).

UNECA 2000, King 2000a). Earlier comments upon the distribution of power in an informational economy relating directly to countries' relative positionings as information transmitters or receivers can also be conceived in terms of their being knowledge producers or consumers. Developing countries that remain exterior to flows of research capital will be excluded from participating in knowledge production, and will therefore be at risk of being consigned to the role of knowledge consumers.

Developing countries could further 'leapfrog' into the hands of telecommunications corporations as *technology* consumers as the concern to connect to the Internet becomes manifest as an end in itself, marginalising reflections upon the comparative advantages of such an achievement as against the prioritising of other social and economic needs (cf. Wionczek 1983, King 2000a, Tandon 2001). For those who are updated and included, the increasing pace of economic and technological developments, decreasing product lifecycles and the increasing pace of product obsolescence could leave some always two steps behind their 'advanced' counterparts in technological uptake (Kenny 1996)⁴⁷. Meanwhile, for the broader mass of all societies, the danger is that the seemingly magnanimous developmental endeavour to get countries and regions technologically updated and online, and so facilitate leapfrogging within the remit of Northern governmental discourse (e.g. G8 2000), could wane once the global Internet-using population had reached such numbers as comfortably secured industrial economies of scale within the ICT sector and other sectors making use of the Internet. In such a case, a significant part of the world population could remain excluded from the information economy loop once a critical market mass was achieved (Miller 2001, Lanvin 1995)⁴⁸.

Whilst Southern countries may therefore make a leap into an information age, if it is only to adopt a server role facilitating the development of capital interests based predominantly in the North then it is unlikely that they will ever *leapfrog* to new positions within the international economy. In contemplating the likely effects stemming from the dominant knowledge economy/society narrative, we need to consider the *relational* character of subordination. As different developments are

⁴⁷ '...the technologically marginalised are not necessarily outsiders. They are those who have been *compulsorily included*. The continual demand to update follows' (Barry 2001: 112).

⁴⁸ Many of the excluded could still be brought within the loop through the insecure and monotonous labour available within the new economy, producing goods in export-processing zones for an economy of signs (brands) to circulate around (cf. Klein 2000) and filling the call centres and warehouses that an expanding service sector and burgeoning Internet economy will depend upon.

consolidated through changes in governmental practices and the legal infrastructure then the content of every country's economic activity may change, whilst *structures* of exploitation remain intact (Hardt & Negri 2000). Importantly however, the simple geo-economic disparities which have been the focus of attention in the past (and which I have intimated so far in trying to work quickly through a large amount of material) are unlikely to exist in such a distinct form, if indeed they ever have. The social divisions between those who do and do not benefit from informational developments will occur *throughout* the global economy, producing positions of relative affluence and deprivation which we might characterise as the *global* North and South (cf. Castells 2000)⁴⁹. It is to such notions of globally dispersed but regionally specifically focussed accumulation that I refer in using these terms.

Inequalities based upon access to information could add a new dimension to asymmetries based upon older political and economic divergences. Considering once again Dedijer and Jéquier's (1987) information pyramid mentioned in the previous chapter (ascending from a mass base of data through processes of selection and refinement that produce information and then knowledge in smaller but qualitatively enriched quantities, peaking with intelligence as the most refined point of understanding), a new international division of labour running parallel to that which has grown up around natural resources can be envisioned wherein the majority world (North and South) engage in the least well-remunerated activities constituting the lower two layers of the pyramid (O'Brien 1983, Castells 1993). Gathering data to be exported and processed abroad can be seen as the equivalent of exporting raw materials for manufacturing abroad – one of the best ways to fall behind and in itself a mark of underdevelopment, whilst a minority produce the Knowledge and construct the Intelligence strategies that are the source of economic 'value-added' and governmental power. Less value-added work might progressively be outsourced from industrialised Northern countries as elements of the 'new' economic development become established and cheaper labour inputs are sought for various activities. This fulfils one of the Northern country fears mentioned, but most likely in a non-economically threatening way for them since labour operating higher up the information pyramid (gaining higher rewards) would remain within these countries.

⁴⁹ The work of the research and campaign NGO *Focus on the Global South* begins from this presumption of globally-dispersed exclusion (<http://www.focusweb.org>).

Steps in this direction can be seen when the OECD (1986: 16) notes that Primary Information Sector growth ('routine information-handling occupations' dealing with goods and services which 'intrinsically convey information' or are useful to its production) is slowing down in OECD countries, but that Secondary Information Sector growth is increasing ('more skill-intensive information handling tasks', the processing of information to produce knowledge).

Throughout any such changes, nodal points of activity will develop within the global economy. Through cumulative cycles of capital accumulation, technological development and investments in social and educational infrastructures, any already present hierarchical positionings will be exaggerated by the uneven distribution of spin-off effects. Incentives to invest in Research and Development and labour training will tend to accrue at the processing end of information production, new generations of communications infrastructure being established within cities or regions which attract business and generate capital for further investment in ICT developments and other infrastructure. The cores of such *global* cities or regions will produce the foci for economic activities whilst other areas may fall behind and become increasingly disconnected from the flows of capital fuelling the global economy (Sassen 1991, cf. Castells 1993). The minority of individuals embodying skills in demand will meanwhile find that these can act as a passport to most areas of the world. Those who benefit will thus be characters and social groups more in the vein of Lash and Urry's (1994: 164-5) mobile subjects, whilst the lower end of the social strata, devoid of specialised and valuable skills, remain territorially constrained.

Alternative Explorations: Open Source and Copyleft

The analysis presented here, of the likely outcomes of where the dominant governmental knowledge economy discursive practice is leading to, is not a particularly optimistic vision, but rather one overlain with a narrative of the repetition and extension of contemporary capital regulation practices to the new areas of knowledge and information. However, within the social application of certain technological developments considered here exist other practices that harbour alternate ways of conceiving the knowledge economy and knowledge-economic actors. The immateriality which characterises the new informational economy lends to

the ease with which products can be reproduced, legally or illegally. The proliferation of copying hardware, downloadable versions of cracked software, and online file-sharing networks all threaten traditional notions of intellectual property and its means of protection. New ways are constantly being sought of making the process of reproduction more difficult and deterring people from breaking IPR rules, from the technical to the legal (the potential costs of prosecution), yet great potential lies within the gathering momentum of people taking a different approach to this ease of reproduction and welcoming it as an opportunity to share and innovate.

For the purposes of this final section we will briefly consider a single example, that of the strong movement amongst computer programmers to supply the 'source code'⁵⁰ of programmes alongside the programme itself, as an open document that can be accessed by any user so that they can adapt, tailor and improve systems. The principle is to leave the source code open for analysis and alteration by all users, with no restrictions other than that the code of anything that they in turn produce must *also* remain open; users cannot subsequently place more restrictive conditions upon adapted versions of the product. The Open Source Movement (OSM) and the Free Software Foundation (FSF)⁵¹ are two movements approaching the dissemination of intellectual property in this way. Copyleft is a legally-established system based upon such a principle whereby something is first *copyrighted*, and then distribution terms such as the General Public License copyleft (GPL) are added giving everyone the right to use, modify and redistribute the copyrighted materials or anything derived from them on condition that these distribution terms are left unchanged such that 'the code and the freedoms become legally inseparable' (GNU 2001b, cf. Berry 2003, Stallman 2003a)⁵².

⁵⁰ The programme logic's command structure, written in a computer language such as C++. This is normally unavailable to the purchaser of a piece of software because after programming this structure is recompiled into computer code (a series of 0s and 1s).

⁵¹ FSF is an outgrowth of Project GNU and founder of the General Public License copyleft (GPL). Project GNU was an endeavour of Richard Stallman to build a free software operating system developed from the unfree, but widely distributed and with open source code, Unix system (GNU is a recursive acronym, 'GNU's Not Unix', Moglen 1999).

⁵² FSF and OSM are quite similar in their main assertions, but contain minor but significant differences of principle and philosophical approach. Whilst FSF insists that no proprietary restrictions may be placed on products under GPL, certain Open Source licenses allow for 'restrictive functions' (restricting what the user can do with the software) to be embedded in products, reintroducing a proprietary edge. Furthermore, FSF bases its approach as a matter of a human right to knowledge as a public good, whilst OSM is concerned more with the efficiency brought about through distributed production (Berry 2003).

These co-operative and 'unowned' forms of intellectual production take advantage of the ease of *re*-production of information stemming from the growth of hi-tech communications, in encouraging all who can to act almost simultaneously as both producers and consumers, or 'prosumers' (Ghosh 1998). This could in turn lead to more effective practices of 'reflexive accumulation' (Lash & Urry 1994), allowing greater innovation and particularisation of systems than are produced within more proprietary modes of exchange. Open sourcing points to what Ghosh (1998) calls 'the economic model of the information age... the "cooking-pot" market: an implicit barter economy with asymmetric transactions'. In cyberspace primary distribution costs can be fixed, ideas being shared with one person or a million for the same expenditure of effort given that once a contribution to a website is placed online it does not cost the poster for it to be accessed (although there may still be costs associated with personally maintaining a website). Ghosh's logic is that even if a million copies of an idea are shared in return for only one other idea, the sharer does not lose from the transaction since the million copies cost no more to distribute. Tacit economic calculations may still be at work in that ideas are most likely to be shared if people feel it worth their while through gains in reputation, feedback, or other ideas as others are encouraged to do the same. As a community of users builds up, more and more ideas and tools will be shared and so the worth of this economy will grow as each user senses the value of contributing and perceives the potential for their consumption⁵³.

Copylefting is a system which began its life and is mostly employed within the computer programming world, yet is swiftly gaining in popularity and could potentially provoke wider social reactions to trends in the privatisation of knowledge. For instance the Design Science Licence, 'a comprehensive, generalised licence' for the application of copyleft principles to 'any work recognised by copyright law', has been established by a US organisation intent upon widening application of the principle (Stutz 2000). There are interesting indications that the open source approach is taking off strongly in this way, moving beyond software and being considered as a good approach to facilitate social and economic development as well as having

⁵³ Ghosh is bold enough to bandy about estimates (\$100bn) of the potential value of these ideas had they been distributed through more formal mechanisms of market exchange. Although superfluous to his argument, such guesstimates bring us back to the point noted in the previous chapter upon the inadequacies of traditional accounting methods for mapping out new economic developments.

broader effects upon the mainstream of governmental-economic knowledge economy discursive practise worldwide.

There is a visible trend for adopting and adapting open source as a developmental approach. For example the Simputer is a design (using slightly-adapted copylefting principles) for a cheap, user-friendly computing device with Internet access conceived as a developmental initiative. The Simputer operating system is Linux-based, a well respected and freely available computer operating system operating under GPL, whilst the hardware specifications function under the Simputer GPL (SGPL)⁵⁴. National and multilateral political institutions and organisations have also expressed interest; UNESCO for instance has established a Free Software Portal to improve understandings of and encourage consideration and participation in the development of open source (UNESCO 2001). President Abdul Kalam of India meanwhile has advocated Open Source as the way forward for software in India, whilst South Africa has put in place policies expressing preference for the use of open source software (Festa 2003, Becker 2003). There has been wide uptake of Linux by government bodies in both the North and South (Yee 1999). The 2001 LinuxAfrica (<http://www.linuxafrica.co.za>) conference in South Africa was the first such Linux-oriented event to take place on the continent and featured representatives from a number of major Linux organisations. The UK's Commission on Intellectual Property Rights (2002: 105), established to consider the interrelation of development and intellectual property rights, has meanwhile advocated developing country governments and development organisations exploring the possibilities of open source systems to avoid high costs and make use of systems that are more adaptable to needs.

The open source approach has also been advocated as a collaborative means of improving access to, and the ability to *produce*, educational resources in developing countries. 'Open content' (Keats 2003, Newmarch 2001) would again mean that resources were made available to be modified, used and redistributed in the hope of reducing the costs of resource investment for the groups involved. If Southern

⁵⁴ The name is both a play on words (simple computer) and more informally functions as an acronym: Simple, Inexpensive, Multilingual Computer (Simputer 2000). The SGPL requires a one-off fee to be paid to the Simputer trust (\$250,000 and \$25,000 respectively for entrepreneurs from developed and developing countries), and allows a one-year hold-back for commercial use of adapted hardware specifications before the new specification need be submitted to the trust to be placed online for public use under SGPL.

educational institutions produced resources collaboratively in this way then, it is argued, the end-results could be made more locally appropriate and up-to-date than contributions of older resources from their Northern counterparts. Through the use of ICTs such knowledge could be dispersed in contributing to a global 'open source economy of ideas' (Ghosh 1998) for use in, and adaptation to, different circumstances. The non-monetary exchange of ideas is one of the most promising prospects for getting Internet access out to remote and developing communities, cultivating global South-South interaction and enabling self-development and the exploration of alternative socio-economic models.

Finally, outside of development concerns, open source is making waves in mainstream corporate software development. In 1998 Netscape, a major provider for Internet browser software, decided to put its source code out into the public domain, having noted the success of the Linux system. Laboratories have also been established with the support and collaboration of other major corporations such as IBM, Dell, Hewlett-Packard, Intel and Hitachi (SDNP 2001). It is significant that ordinarily proprietorial enterprises are beginning to explore an open source approach. This returns us to an important difference between the discourses of the two mentioned movements, FSF and OSM, the former being concerned with the freedom of software as a human right to knowledge as a public good, whilst the latter is more concerned with the productivity and efficiency gains to be made by widening the software's producer and user base (Berry 2003, Raymond 2002). It is more feasible that open source could become mainstreamed on the basis of an OSM discourse (perhaps adjusted accordingly to enable forms of restricted proprietorship, as with the Simputer license) appealing to profit margins rather than abstract principles of right, a point of concern to FSF advocates (Berry 2003, Stallman 2003b). However an OSM discourse framed in terms of economic efficiency could still produce a range of significant further effects within the wider discourse of intellectual property rights, depending upon how it is engaged. This potential highlights the underdetermined nature of the changes that have been observed or projected, and serves as a reminder that we should speak not of *the* knowledge economy but of the various *possible* (and not necessary exclusive) knowledge economies, as well as of economies wherein knowledge's role is relatively unchanged from that which it occupied previously. The discursive practice of the dominant knowledge economy

narrative can be viewed more productively from within such a context, as can the activities of those agencies involved in performing the discourse – such as the World Bank in its rhetorical turn towards becoming a Knowledge Bank.

Conclusion

It is significant that the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA 2000) plays out the same governmental-economic narrative as its Northern counterparts, stressing the need to cut back regulations and encourage the involvement of private capital in fostering the uptake of technology (in telecommunications especially) and e-commerce in a bid to allow African countries to leapfrog and play catch-up with other economic regions. Documents such as this provide evidence of how the development narrative is being re-oriented towards knowledge economy concerns, yet in this instance it would seem that older themes and concerns such as the primacy of the free market and a prioritisation of the needs of private capital remain unchanged. The institutional framework stands fast for now, but the discourse of a knowledge economy is more than just new trappings on the house of economic thinking. Whatever basis there may be to the many excited papers produced upon the emergence of a new economy, we are not experiencing the levels of radical change intimated in the notions of whole new stages and modes of economic and societal activity. However changes are taking place, especially through the adoption of the knowledge economy/society as a new mode of governance and economic regulation, and a concern to produce new types of subject that can perform and prosper through the changes considered.

As I have illustrated through the previous two chapters, the notion of the knowledge society has been deployed in a manner which heightens awareness of, and a sense of urgency at the imminence of, the coming of the knowledge economy; and the need to respond in an appropriate manner or else become an economic backwater, or be restricted to working and living within one. In the same manner in which Hardt and Negri (2000) draw upon Marx's belief in capitalism's being a progression from feudalism to argue that their conception of Empire is a step forward from the obscenities of Imperialism, so we might hope that changes understood in the form of the 'knowledge economy' will open wider the gateways of opportunity to a greater

number of people than has the industrial era. In a similar manner it can also be hoped that concerns with the centrality of information to development with regard to enabling transparent democratic governance and effective market-functioning might engage a progression over the failures that have been seen in the development project since it began in earnest following the end of the Second World War. It is to this project, and the discourse that surrounds and produces it, that we now turn in the final section of the first part of this analysis.

The Logic and Machinery of Development

Introduction

'In the beginning there was a river. The river became a road and the road branched out to the whole world. And because the road was once a river it was always hungry.' (Ben Okri, *The Famished Road*, 1991: 3)

Before we can make any sense of new developmental endeavours centring around the notion of the 'knowledge economy', we need first consider what development *is*. What is the substance of this concept, central to a major field of discourse, that has occupied the time and resources of many governments in the so-called 'developed' and 'developing' countries; prompted the establishment of multilateral organisations like the World Bank and IMF; mobilised massive political movements, and produced many academic departments focussed specifically upon it; and been the locus of North-South-North capital flows for over fifty years? In the final chapter of the first part of this work, I will argue that 'development' is the focus of an open, complex and multi-faceted discursive terrain, an assemblage or 'apparatus' (Foucault 1980: 194-5), within which the voices that tend to predominate are those of governments and capital-holders. Development at government level is big business, failed in terms of stated objectives such as ending the 'evils' of poverty, hunger and exclusion, but successful in producing other outcomes that would most likely not have been the direct or indirect aims of many contributors, such as maintaining an international balance of power and positions of politico-economic dominance, and producing international divisions of labour and spaces for capital expansion. Following a brief critical outline of development discourse's core objectives, instruments and structuring elements, the performance crisis that the discourse is seen as having entered into is considered, as well as the contention that this crisis is actually development's normal operational state.

This latter argument maintains that development is best considered as a form of self-sustaining drama indifferent to truth and falsity, the problems it produces becoming

the raw materials for further developmental endeavours. I argue that this perspective deserves some credit, but cannot be left as a throwaway criticism. Taking the dominant strand of the discourse to stand for development *per se*, and criticising the discourse and its practise as a whole on this basis, produces a weak form of argument that avoids engaging with the complexity and the open, underdetermined range of situations that are produced within the apparatus of development. Each dramatic turn produced by the will to reform development so as to bring its outcomes into line with its aspirations needs to be engaged with in assessing how things have (difference) and have not (repetition) changed. Dramaturgical performances can take radically different forms, and some of these could have significant social and political effects; the scripting of a drama can be premeditated or improvised, and both the drama's performance and its scripting can include the greater or lesser participation of those positioned as the 'audience', from the polite handclaps which in part signify the end of a performance, through the cheers and boo's of those watching a pantomime, to the *ad lib* involvement of bystanders in performance art. Considering this opens onto a first exploration of whether, and if so how, developmental discursive practices are altering with regard to the growing importance of knowledge economy and society discourses, and an assessment of whether this constitutes a whole new *act*, a new *form* of performance, or simply a new *scene* in the development drama. The way in which the World Bank has begun to respond to the state of development discourse is also given a first consideration here, before we move on to consider the Bank's own discourse of reform and renewal in Part Two.

What is Development? Origins and Definitions

Three moments – the British Development Act of 1940, the founding of the United Nations in 1945, and Harry Truman's inaugural address as President of the United States in 1949 – have been accorded the status of discursive events marking development's emergence as a political-economic agenda (Abrahamsen 2000, Escobar 1995, Sachs 1997, Overton 2000, Ruth 2000, Simon & Dodds 1998). However its roots could equally well be traced back through modes of 'colonial governmentality' and economics (Kalpagam 2000, Pieterse 2000), Judeo-Christian understandings of linear rather than cyclical history (Rist 1997), and the concerns of discourses of Modernity (Shanin 1997). Development is an ambiguous term, used to

describe everything from the provision of information upon treating diarrhoea in a small village, to the financing of a multi-million dollar dam project and the reorientation of national state-economy relations. It is the central term of a range of elements within a discursive field, and so to talk meaningfully about aspects of development we must mark out the areas within this ongoing worldwide conversation in which we are most interested (and in turn the main speakers and the terms of their debate). We may very roughly demarcate both macro and micro areas of development-in-practice; the large-scale activities of governmental and inter-governmental organisations focussing on national planning and policy; and the micro-practices of both these groups and smaller organisations (charities, non-governmental organisations and so forth) in localised projects. This second form is less a direct area of my concern, although there is much to be explored with regard to the interrelations and contradictions between approaches and ideals practised at this level and the perspectives operative at the governmental.

This work is chiefly concerned with the macro-practice of development as the processes of national and international level policy-formation that are substantially oriented towards *planning* change and so are concerned with justifying intervention from above. In this area development is big business, very profitable to Northern industries, receiving governments, and development agencies alike (cf. Hobart 1993). Self-interest has long been recognised as one of its central driving forces; from securing the continued supply of cheap factors of production (especially labour and natural resources such as oil) and opening up markets for exports and capital with the end of the colonial period; through fears of poverty-induced overpopulation producing environmental degradation and subsequent imbalances in the world economy; to concerns about political and economic security in the Cold War producing a perceived need to institutionalise market principles and capitalist cultural norms in the newly-independent countries (Escobar 1995, Abrahamsen 2000, Sachs 1992, Dollar 2001, Hettne 1995). As Joseph Stiglitz (1997b) stressed in a speech early on in his time as Vice President and Chief Economist at the World Bank, 'developed countries have increasingly recognized that it is in their economic interests to provide aid... developing countries have become the worldwide engine of economic expansion'. Thus the US Agency for International Development (USAID 2001) can state its

interest in 'expanding democracy and free markets while improving the lives of the citizens of the developing world'.

We can begin with a conceptual definition. 'Development' is in essence a process term signifying a positively-valued form of change; at its simplest it can be understood as an increasing or improvement in certain qualities, a form of growth or maturation. So it is that experienced development workers and development economics textbooks alike can refer to development as simply being 'improving the society' or providing a 'quality of life' improvement (Clark 1991: 26, Todaro 2000: 17, cf. Soubbotina & Sheram 2000). This 'improvement' has been considered in variously more and less narrow terms, but most such distinctions refer to a *linear path of change*, with some countries further along this path than others. As a discursive keyword its meaning is denoted by signifiers selected and prioritised through negotiation, and so the dominant value structure shaping its definition will therefore tend to reflect power-relations between subject positions constituted within the discourse. A set of variants upon the key-term are deployed to distinguish countries within a set of hierarchical relations as leading or lagging in a quest all are assumed to be engaged in. Hobart (1993: 1-2) argues that people must first be constituted as *under-developed* and ignorant in order for them then to be perceived as developing, and that 'being underdeveloped often implies, if not actual iniquity, at least stupidity, failure and sloth'. Without such symbolic subjugation it would be very difficult for the West to claim 'developed' status and position itself to advise the to-be-developed upon how to progress. An achieved end-state of the 'developed' or 'industrialised' countries has often been positioned against either a negatively-defined state of lack or inadequacy (the *less-developed* and *less-industrialised*), or a state of progress (the *developing* and *industrialising*). To consolidate these distinguishing terms, the relationship between developers and those to-be-developed is constructed through the establishment of categories and knowledge about different states of being, and processes of transition.

As a result of increasing concerns regarding our having entered an age – and adopted a language – of perpetual change under 'advanced' capitalism, development has in recent times come to be seen as touching all economic players. Contemporary development and 'new economy' literature will frequently emphasise that all countries are still developing (see for example World Bank 1998a: 79, Hettne 1995: 266). Yet

the prefixes and suffixes indicating different levels of progression along a linear path still dominate the construction of actor positions within the development landscape. New choices of referent are often enough born of frustration with this narrow linearity⁵⁵. Yet as Biersteker (1995) stresses, we need to remain aware of how ideas can define away problems as much as they define or redefine them. Any simple deployment of a rich country – poor country distinction will firstly demarcate roughly the same referents (in terms of country groupings) as the older, and so perpetuate the development narrative and its conceptualisations of ‘us’ and ‘other’. It will secondly risk overlooking the existence of socio-economic groups of sufficient size and political influence in every country who benefit from the dominant system such as to make efforts to facilitate its perpetuation.

A variation upon the North-South distinction is strategically useful in this regard. As with the demise of the Third World⁵⁶ as an analytical category, there is commonly accepted to be no simple unified South and no very clear and distinguished North (Biersteker 1995). Reference to a ‘global North’ and ‘global South’, as mentioned briefly in the previous chapter, can however be used as socio-economic indicators in referring to the global dispersal of those with and without sufficient resource access and political rights and provisions (cf. Sachs 1997: 291). Accepting the difficulty of escaping from the strictures of a discourse whilst trying to engage with and criticise

⁵⁵ An interesting but problematic contention has been made for instance that the most important difference between countries concerns their patterns of consumption rather than production, such that we might more usefully refer to Mass Consumption (MCCs) and Elite Consumption Countries (ECCs) (Young & Boehmer-Christiansen 1997: fn.9). This would be an interesting alternative if consumption were to be understood in the widest possible sense of consumption of health, education and other resources (of the potentialities and fruits of political enfranchisement, and of the transport infrastructures well-established within and between capital cities and important trading zones, and so forth). Yet significant differences would still remain between countries at the level of production. The proportions of population in various relations to the means of production, the predominant forms of production undertaken, and the rewards made upon labour under these different conditions are all distinguished between countries, and this is missed in speaking only of consumption as much as speaking only of production surely misses the importance of consumption differences.

⁵⁶ The category of Third World – the countries most urgently needing to be developed and fitting into a scheme of First, Second and Third Worlds – remains a powerfully politicised referent and rhetorical device. However it is today commonly argued to no longer exist, or at least no longer be useful as a single category for a broad mass of ‘developing’ countries (Castells 1993). This view is prompted by a series of changes that have occurred in the past 20 years greatly widening disparities between global regions; the demise of the ‘Second World’ category with the dissolution of the USSR and the perceived ‘failure of communism’ extending the reach of the market mechanism as the dominant mode of capital regulation; the success of the ‘newly-industrialising’ East Asian countries (NICs) at ‘developing’ in the sense of increasing their GDP and investing in infrastructure; the partial success of some South American economies in the same; and the failure, by the same measurements, of the sub-Saharan African region prompting thoughts of the need for a ‘Fourth World’ category.

aspects of its functioning⁵⁷, this work has not and will not make counter-discursive contributions upon appropriate terms of reference, but will rather stay within the standard terminological boundaries so as to analyse how their use both has and has not altered through the changes considered. North and South are thus most commonly used in referring to countries seen as more and less 'advanced' upon the path of 'development', whilst the *global* distinction is engaged where appropriate.

Objectives and Indicators: Poverty, Growth and Modernisation

As mentioned, we might consider the modern development agenda as a means towards the end of becoming modern, an extension and/or application of Enlightenment rationality. Development has been linked to or equated with the social, cultural, political and economic processes of change brought under the banner of 'Modernisation': industrialisation and urbanisation; democratisation combined with centralisation of power and authority and increasing bureaucratisation; universalised education; individualisation and the loss of traditional values, ideals and social ties, and through this a process of secularisation and the growing dominance of the scientific episteme (Hobart 1993, Hettne 1995, Diawara 2000, Sardar 1999, Apffel-Marglin & Marglin 1990). The modern episteme, framing the 'economy' in the sense of an 'organism', has positioned growth and development as essential aspects of an economic story as the organism is nourished upon the life-force of capital accumulation (Gibson-Graham 1996: 97-101, Amariglio 1988, Foucault 1994). With modernisation has come a concern with that latest 'modern' phenomenon, globalisation, through a feeling that national development strategies cannot operate away from serious consideration of their global context (Munck 1999, Ruth 2000). Development has thus been argued to require the careful negotiation of a path through the intricate interweaving of international trade and financial flows, in order to ensure adequate integration on terms conducive to its achievement (Stiglitz 1997a, 1998a)⁵⁸.

⁵⁷ '...even the most radically critical discourse easily slips into the form, the logic, and the implicit postulations of exactly what it seeks to contest' (Kate Manzo (1991: 8), cited in Munck 1999: 202).

⁵⁸ 'Integration is essential: The integration of the developing countries, in particular the least developed among them, into the world economy is a precondition for their growth and sustainable economic and social development.' (European Union 2000).

Development has been argued to constitute the modernisation of poverty, signifying the end of 'pauperism' as an untreatable exterior and the production of 'the poor' as objects of knowledge and management to be assisted and controlled (Escobar 1995: 22-3). Poverty is a core concept in development, and poverty eradication a central objective. The sentiment of the World Bank's (2000m) mission statement, 'our dream is a world free of poverty', is repeatedly echoed in other governmental and civil society pronouncements that the central objective of development must be to 'reduce poverty with a view to its eventual eradication' (EU 2001, cf. Clark 1991: 19). 'The poor' is a relational category, a dispersed and diverse agglomeration of peoples bound together by the collective attitude of the *non-poor* towards them. They are defined in their negativity through the *non-possession* of goods, of resource access and of a certain standard of living, the *lack* of an income which is expected to secure these things, and the lack of agency to secure such an income for themselves. 'The poor' are predominantly defined by their passivity, and throughout the mainstream of development discourse up to the present they have been constructed as destitute and merely awaiting aid of some kind (cf. Rahnema 2001). Mechanisms to deal with poverty then produce passivity through a discourse which informs 'the poor' of what they are and are not capable of or entitled to. As we shall see in considering developments at the Bank, a certain few more recent discursive contributions have begun to consider how 'the poor' might be differently constructed, not *presuming* the unchanging homogeneity of the referent, and inscribing within it specific agentic capacities and voices.

Eradicating poverty through development requires negotiating definitions of what poverty *is*, the means to measure and mark out 'the poor' existing in this condition, and the means and instruments by which to deal with it. Development discourse produces and problematises 'poverty' through a series of statistical operations. 'The poor' are the product of an exercise in commodification and standardisation, of defining and measuring 'incomes' before contrasting the results within and between countries. Figures such as the proportion of the world's population living in poverty on less than \$1 or \$2 a day are regularly produced in speeches by the World Bank President and elsewhere (e.g. MDG 2001a) in framing presentations and stressing the need for development. The varying significance of these sums to 'the poor' in different countries, and the difficulty of calculating such figures with regard to those

living in non-monetary-based communities, are marginalised in the process of producing economies to-be-developed through 'modalities of counting, classification, and accounting' (Kalpagam 2000: 420).

The repeated deployment of 'the poor' as a globally homogeneous referent can produce a certain laziness in the analysis of local, national and international issues of resource distribution (production and consumption), social visibility and political representation. The more development discourse revolves around the (singular) problem of the global 'poor', the more it is reduced to being primarily the statistics-producing exercise that constitutes one necessary but alone insufficient aspect of its operations. So as well as the wealth of specific data and information deployed in framing problems, articulating solutions, and criticising perceived failed initiatives, an overwhelming barrage of millions and billions of deprived peoples stretching the imagination beyond any sense of the real is regularly produced⁵⁹. The use of such statistics is primarily performative, the specific accuracy of the content (or the explanation of its context so as to frame its significance and justify apparent inconsistencies) being less significant than the intended effect of impressing upon audiences the urgency of the matter to hand and shocking them into action, or into complicity with the suggestions of the writer or speaker.

To draw an example from the operations of the World Bank, in 1997 Bank President James Wolfensohn (1997a, 1997d, 1997e, 1997f, 1999g) made five references to the number of children not in school, varying from 120 million in the February to 150 million in the May of that year, falling by 10 million with each subsequent reference before jumping up once again to 150 by the September⁶⁰. In a 1999 article written with Archbishop Dr. George Carey, the number of 250 million was given for what was seemingly the same referent, whilst in a paper written with the development economist Amartya Sen and published one month before, nearly half that figure was given:

⁵⁹ Arturo Escobar (1995: 234) for instance argues that poverty became a global problem when in 1948 the World Bank defined as 'poor' all those living on a *per capita* income of less than \$100 per annum, making two-thirds of the world's population officially 'poor'.

⁶⁰ Wolfensohn would seem to be aware of the apparently purely dramaturgical appearance of his use of statistics, at one point in a speech insisting that '[t]his is not a Hollywood presentation, this is not a statement by someone who's trying to attract attention, these are the facts of the demographics' (Wolfensohn 1999l).

'Three billion people live on less than \$2 a day, 1.3 billion do not have clean water, 130 million children do not go to school, and 40,000 children die every day because of hunger-related diseases' (Wolfensohn & Sen 1999)

'In 1999, 11 million children under the age of five will die of preventable disease. For those children who live past five, more than 250 million of them will work instead of going to school' (Wolfensohn & Carey 1999)

Importantly, alongside the statistical blizzard Wolfensohn *also* frequently engages a stylistic manoeuvre that personalises the Bank's development programme through anecdotes that emphasise the importance of individual successes, and draw parallels between the hopes and needs of peoples of all countries. The insistence that 'the real test of development can be measured ... by the smile on a child's face' exemplifies Wolfensohn's (1995) personalisation of the development story, paralleled in the presence of the smiling child on the Bank's website front-page mentioned in Chapter One. Wolfensohn commonly refers to the hopes and dreams of, the chances for and the threats to, *our* children and those in developing countries in his speeches, as well as the children not in school and *our* responsibility to ensure they get an education⁶¹. 'Our responsibility' to give the world's children a chance is an emotionally inclusive phrasing stressing a common project for the developed and the developing to leave behind us a more just, peaceful and safer world for the children (Wolfensohn 2000b). In this way Wolfensohn rhetorically seeks to bring onboard the implied lackadaisical listener who may not care about the fate of the poor in developing countries: 'We can sit comfortably in Paris or in Washington and ignore them. But our children cannot' (Wolfensohn 1997i).

The emphasis upon inclusivity and making the audience *feel* the benefits of development by putting a face to success stretches through Wolfensohn's (1995a) anecdotal style as a whole, relaying stories of 'the woman entrepreneur that I met in the small town of Katwe, Uganda', 'villagers in the arid province of Gansu, China', and 'slum dwellers in Port-au-Prince, Haiti' whom he has met and seen development working for through Bank-funded projects. A few Bank initiatives indicate that Wolfensohn's anecdotal style is being influential, encouraging a warmer and more

⁶¹ Wolfensohn referred to such at least 32 times in the nearly 60 speeches documented on the Bank's website up to December 1999 (Wolfensohn 1995, 1996b, 1997a, 1997b, 1997c, 1997d, 1997e, 1997f, 1997g, 1997i, 1998a, 1998b, 1998f, 1998g, 1998i, 1998j, 1998k, 1998l, 1998m, 1999b, 1999c, 1999d, 1999e, 1999g, 1999h, 1999i, 1999j, 1999k, 1999m, 1999o, 1999p, 1999q).

user-friendly element within its discourse, and promoting the image of a *listening* bank. The Bank's mission statement has been expanded into a book, *Our Dream: a world free of poverty* (Granzow 2000), advertised as depicting 'real stories about poverty... where the Bank and its partners have made a demonstrable impact' (World Bank 2000m), whilst the *Voices of the Poor* project seeks to recount individual stories with a face, again being advertised as having 'asked the poor about their experience with poverty' in a study of '60,000 people in 60 countries' (Wolfensohn 2000b).

So, to briefly summarise what we have seen so far, the origins of development as a social and governmental project are ambiguous – the roots of the contemporary understanding of the word as a desired process are traceable to various points of origin giving the impression of 'development' as anything from a post-war to a near-perennial concern of Western societies. Development can be seen as a form of exercise in pursuit of modernisation, transforming societies in their politics, their beliefs, and their margins (bringing 'the poor' within a discourse of societal management), and in its dominant form is conceived as a linear path of change from less to more upon a scale of positively-valued variables (income per capita, access to health and education resources, and so on). As a result, development exists as the product of a series of statistical operations, wherein the statistics frequently play a performative role in raising the priority of developmental issues as a matter of urgency, and reducing the complexity of various problems to the materials appropriate to a developmental formula. At the same time the discourse works through personalisation, giving development a 'face' so as to draw out the connections between the more and less developed, and to help its benefactors feel the effects of development's practise.

Development Beyond Growth?

Consistently, at its core, the dominant forms of 'improvement' and change considered as objectives of development at the macro-level have long been economic growth, measured in the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP), alongside indicators of industrialisation. The rhetoric of trickle-down theory has dominated within this governmental development discourse (the notion that as an economy grows and more capital flows in and through it, more will pass by even those poorest areas, so

that all will benefit from economic growth). Earlier attempts to define and measure poverty worked from population statistics and GDP, with little consideration even of national income distribution beyond quintile measurements (dividing the national income into fifths and considering the proportions of the population in each fifth, from richest to poorest). Two quotes from firstly the then Vice President and Chief Economist at the World Bank, Joseph Stiglitz, and secondly from John Clark, an experienced development worker and writer⁶², can serve to illustrate that however much different actor groups may disagree on aims and instruments – such as the role of the market – there is some consensus across a broad range of critical participants that development has in the past been defined too narrowly:

‘It used to be that development was seen as simply increasing GDP. Today we have a broader set of objectives, including democratic development, egalitarian development, sustainable development, and higher living standards.’ (Stiglitz 1997a)

‘Development is in crisis, and the clamour for a new approach is growing, a new approach based on a broader definition of development’ (Clark 1991: 26)

As the quotes illustrate, the standard response to a perceived crisis in development’s performance and in the confidence of its actors has been to broaden the outlook of development efforts (producing multiple prefixes such as human-centred, sustainable, egalitarian, and participatory or democratic development) and to position new variables in the development process such as basic needs, women, education and the environment (and so construct new sets of statistics and negotiate their standards of measurement). Poverty is increasingly defined more broadly as an issue of access to many resources and not just as a measurement of income (a food system, education, healthcare, land, natural resources, credit facilities, space for political involvement, social-political-physical infrastructure)⁶³.

⁶² Clark worked with Oxfam and other NGOs for 18 years before working for the World Bank’s NGO and Civil Society Unit for 6 years. He later took up a post at the LSE whilst on a sabbatical from the World Bank, and now works as a Project Director in the UN Secretary General’s office on reforming the UN’s relations with civil society.

⁶³ For example, from the European Union (2000) *Development Policy Statement*: ‘Poverty is defined not simply as the lack of income and financial resources but also as encompassing the notion of vulnerability and such factors as no access to adequate food supplies, education and health, natural resources and drinking water, land, employment and credit facilities, information and political involvement, services and infrastructure.’

So whilst the UN Development Program (UNDP 1999: 18-19) writes of development being a combination of economic growth *and* social change, standard development economics textbooks (e.g. Todaro 2000) today also emphasise that we have moved beyond GDP-centred development visions to embrace the widening of sustenance (basic needs), raising of self-esteem, and increasing of freedoms as core values. These appended versions are then thematised as the *new* development project, *Development Mk.II*, as when Clark (1991: 30) speaks of seeking 'just development' through the DEPENDS approach (Development of infrastructure, Economic growth, Poverty alleviation, Equity, Natural-resource base protection, Democracy, and Social justice). New targets are also set at an international level to re-vitalise the project's momentum and emphasise unity. The Millennium Development Goals (MDG 2001a), a set of objectives determined through negotiation at the UN Millennium Summit and agreed upon by all member countries as well as major multilateral players such as the World Bank, place poverty reduction at the top of their development shopping list but also emphasise other goals such as achieving universal primary education and improving gender equality, reducing child mortality and improving maternal health, combating HIV and AIDS and ensuring environmental sustainability.

Development, especially as practised by the World Bank, is also presented as 'a process of expanding the freedoms that people enjoy'. Development on this view constitutes a liberation from the strictures of poverty and from the apolitical, disempowering mode of existence that this fosters or imposes: freedom 'from starvation, from undernourishment, from illiteracy, from preventable and premature death, but also freedom of speech, of political participation, and of social cooperation' (Wolfensohn & Sen 1999, cf. Sen 2000). Weakening the ties of tradition and promoting liberal-democratic political institutions and market-economies is seen as strengthening freedom and opportunities for all, and weakening unjustly held positions of power. So Joseph Stiglitz (1997a), in his time at the World Bank, spoke of how development constitutes a transformation of society, with people 'breaking out of the poverty in which they had been mired for centuries'. Stiglitz (1997b, my emphasis) elsewhere reaches the conclusion that '[i]n the process of development, poverty can be reduced, the environment maintained, *civil liberties increased*, and civil society more generally strengthened'. Development is thus presented as a potentially wholly positive experience. A sense of humility is advised with regard to past errors

alongside an awareness of the need for widening participation in the agendas for change, but with such cautions the promised outcome is a win-win situation.

This turn in the discourse can be seen as a reaction to liberation's deployment as a critical tool against development within Dependency Theory and those approaches brought under the banner of Post-Development, an attempt to reclaim this positively-valued mode of change as an *aspect* and not a *failing* of development. I will next briefly outline and assess the contributions of Dependency Theory and Post-Development in arguing that the discursive apparatus of development is more underdetermined than its staunchest critics insist and that it is therefore worth maintaining a position of engagement with development, aiming for a radical reconfiguration of its discursive practice, rather than rejecting it outright. Whilst certain contributions outlined below are helpful in honing down a critical perspective upon the discourse under consideration, others present an unproductively over-determined diagnosis of development as a form of sovereign (Western, American) and repressive power, forgetting firstly that spaces for resistance and counter-practice will always exist, and secondly that for such power to hold good it must in some way be productive (Foucault 1984a: 61). In forgetting these things these contributions in some way practise something of the subjection (of 'the poor', the 'underdeveloped') that they accuse the discourse of.

Critical Thinking Against and Beyond Development

Development has been argued to be a mode of oppression fostering hopes that are unrealisable within the system that it originates from and contributes to. Dependency Theorists like André Gunder Frank (1996) contended that the now-developed countries may once have been *un*-developed, but were never *under*-developed. This was rather a condition emerging out of the same process by which the developed countries *became* developed; on this view capitalism cannot be expected to develop the less-developed countries because it is *not* a 'system of development' (Amin 1997: 14). The direct aid provided as emergency relief by the developers was in turn argued to express only the guilty generosity of the oppressor (Friere 1996). Structures of imperialistic resource extraction and labour exploitation made development possible in the now developed countries, but operated rather in the fashion of *counter*-

development for others, producing increasingly polarised modes of association between countries more central and peripheral (or metropolitan and satellite) to the international economy (Wallerstein 1979, 2000). The dynamics of exploitation and expropriation were on this view such that countries 'to-be-developed' supply the major source of low-cost (low value-added) materials and labour upon which 'developed' countries then perform high value-added activities. Flows of capital gather in their initial form in the poorer countries, to be multiplied and deposited like silt in the economies of the economically-dominant countries. The process has been allegorised to a vampiric sucking of the lifeblood (economic resources) out of countries (Frank 1996: 106-7, cf. Amin 1997: 10-14). For this reason 'delinking' (Amin 1990: xiv) countries and subjecting all inter-national economic and social relations to the imperatives of internal national development has been argued to be the only true path towards development. *True* development can be 'total liberation' on this view, only when it is self-directed and democratically-organised 'self-development', as against what is perceived as the efficiency-obsessed and consequently elitist post-war 'development' endeavours (Goulet 1996: 545-549)⁶⁴.

Dependency Theory suffered from positing a single, inherent structure of capitalism that determined all international relations and flows of capital and allowed little space to explore how the situation may *have* (under a variety of contemporary conditions), or may in future *be* (by action affecting these contemporary conditions) altered other than through separatist endeavours such as that suggested by Samir Amin. This view in turn depended upon a belief in the benevolence of developmental elites within countries and a great faith in the transparency of country governance structures to ensure that separatist projects would not simply foster autarky and corruption, empowering local elites in new ways. If we start instead from the premise that there is in fact no 'capitalism' but rather a series of existent and potential or latent 'capitalisms' (that is, many different modes of capital regulation that would be recognisably

⁶⁴ Samir Amin's later work (1997, 1999) has moved away from the more deterministic position adopted here, now considering the logic of international capital accumulation as being 'underdetermined' in a manner more akin to the Foucaultian positioned outlined later in this chapter. That is, as consisting of an assemblage of different trends that open onto a number of different possible outcomes, even if likelihoods are heavily biased through the mutually supportive interactions of more dominant players. From this more underdetermined and open understanding Amin is able to suggest a more optimistic vision of a 'polycentric' world wherein new balances of power and new roles for the World Bank and IMF create the political space for renegotiating the regulation of capital in ways that promote development.

'capitalist'), this opens onto the possibility of exploring the many different forms in which development *also* can be reproduced. Dependency Theorists did not question the stated *ends* of development as conceived in the mainstream of post-war discourse (industrialisation, modernisation, economic growth), but rather contended that the suggested means towards these ends within the mainstream of development discourse were obstructive rather than facilitatory.

Post-Development is the name given to the somewhat loose agglomeration of critical writers upon development who have questioned both the suggested means, the ends towards which they are directed, and the need for *any* intervention or planned change in the communities of those to-be-developed. The label has come to encompass a broad swathe of writers, from the self-avowedly anti-development (Illich 1997, Sachs 1992, Rahnema 1997) or post-modern (L'Apres-Developpement 2002), through more cautiously experimental interventions with post-structuralist intentions (Brigg 2002), to those uncomfortable with the label in criticising both development and post-development discourse (Munck 1999, Maiava 2002, Fagan 1999), but nonetheless trying to somehow go *beyond* development. Two lines of criticism which have emerged to dominance are particularly worth consideration; firstly the argument that Development is a form of Modernisation which is in turn a form of Westernisation, the production of 'the poor' and 'underdevelopment' as discursive objects being first steps towards 'developmental' interventions that extend Western social and economic principles; and secondly the assertion that development inevitably fails in practice, but that this failure is consumed and reproduced in discursive modifications that further drive developmental endeavours.

Firstly, then, can the Modernisation entailed within Development be read as a mode of 'Westernisation'? Development on this view is seen as 'a standard by which the West measures the non-West' (Sardar 1999: 49), the discourse of 1st, 2nd and 3rd Worlds being one produced and managed primarily through the agency of '1st World' scholars and public policy institutions (Tucker 1999: 6-7). Development is presented as an 'amoeba-like, shapeless but ineradicable' entity with no core content but one essential function of justifying intervention in the name of a higher goal (Sachs 1992:

4, cf. Frank 1997)⁶⁵. Intervention requires organisation and preparation, and so development becomes 'a synonym for more or less planned social and economic change' (Hobart 1993: 1, cf. Escobar 1992). These interventions introduce new modes of representation, extending the influence of Western norms (such as concerns with the primacy of rationality and efficiency) and integrating nations into the dominant economic and social framework of liberal-democratic consumer-capitalism, and in turn colonising peoples' realities and imposing a Western world-view upon developmental subjects (Marglin 1990, Mehmet 1999, Sachs 1992, Escobar 1992, 1995, Latouche 1993).

As mentioned earlier with Escobar (1995), development discourse is here held firstly to *produce* 'the poor' as a passive category of subjects who are never given the chance to explain what help *they* feel they do and do not need, or even to negotiate how poverty is defined and thus whether they fit the category ascribed to them. Societies prior to developmental intervention are meanwhile depicted as existing in states of underdeveloped destitution, with masses of 'the poor' waiting to be lifted out of their condition (Sahlins 1997, Rahnema 1995). The 'developing' sit somewhere at a mid-point, with the threat of potentially sinking back into the quagmire of underdevelopment if developmental efforts are interrupted hovering as a permanent threat and inducement to play by the development rules. Once 'the poor' and the 'developing' are established and the subjects understand their position of inferiority, developmental initiatives then serve in enforcing a Western economic viewpoint and extending the operative principles of *homo economicus* to the subjects of development (Escobar 1995, Rahnema 2001). As Majin Rahnema (2001: 5, cf. Rahnema 1995) puts it, 'the "have-nots" are led to internalize the values of the "Economic Man"', producing a mushrooming of induced needs that are then classified as lacks⁶⁶. With the reproduction of Economic Man, development intervention serves to extend Western market principles and institutions across the world.

⁶⁵ Shifts in the discourse are often characterised as being designed to re-legitimate the North's right to intervene in the South once the discourse's appeal fades. For example see Abrahamsen 2000 on developmental concerns with 'good governance'.

⁶⁶ For writers like Rahnema (1995) and Ivan Illich (1997), even the Basic Needs contribution to development discourse (wherein the focus was supposed to shift towards securing sufficient food, clothing, shelter and basic education for 'the poor' and away from large-scale projects) was simply the imputing of the needs and lacks of a normal person in a Western society.

This form of algebraic critique (Development = Modernisation = Westernisation, D=M=W) is once again too closed and reductionist. Although it might serve as an effective polemical and confrontational debate-opener or politicising slogan, it leaves no space for analysis of the actual logic and dynamics of development discourse and serves in effect to reduce understanding to a campaign banner. To equate development with modernisation, with Westernisation, is to insist that the three signifiers attach to exactly the same referent, or at the least that what is development fits neatly inside what is modernisation, which in turn can be encapsulated within what is Westernisation. Yet to return to a comment from the beginning of this chapter, development is an ambiguous term, in essence a process term signifying a positively-valued form of change. The territory marked out by development is not necessarily more or less inclusive than, but simply *different* from that of modernisation or Westernisation, and although in the manner of a Venn diagram there are undoubtedly some points of overlap it is bad analysis to generalise such restricted occurrences to a terminological equation. There is no logical equivalence to be drawn between modernisation and 'Westernisation', which is but an over-embracing reference to the spread of a certain form of capitalist regulation and its perceived social, political and cultural effects (cf. Amin 1997, Pieterse 2000)⁶⁷. Certain contributions to development discourse presume the potential for universalising a Western socio-economic perspective and institutional forms, but once again the existence (potential and actual) of *different* forms of development calls for a more critical and conditional, textured analysis of contemporary events.

The second major trend of post-development thinking holds that the failures of development are a part of its functioning (Lohmann 1998), that development constitutes the planning of poverty (Illich 1997) rather than the path towards its resolution. The statistics frequently cited – as with the Wolfensohn speeches above – to emphasise the need for development work have hardly improved, if not worsened for many countries, over the post-war period of the development project, whilst so-called 'donor fatigue' has affected both governments and individuals⁶⁸. Development's

⁶⁷ 'Americanisation' and 'Globalisation' are commonly enough used in referring to an ambiguous and presumed related set of phenomena, whilst the spread of 'Toyotism' or the 'East Asian' model of economic governance are given scant attention in such critical literature (Pieterse 2000).

⁶⁸ From the problematic status of US contributions to the World Bank Group's soft-loan wing the International Development Association (IDA), the latest episode of which is mentioned later in this chapter with the Report of the Meltzer Commission, to the ongoing gap between the proportion of GNP

'monopolistic, arrogant and failed form' (Caufield 1997: 338) has been argued to constitute 'a closed system of beliefs impervious to ostensibly contrary evidence' (Hobart 1993: 4), using the falsehoods and failures it generates as the raw materials for further planning and corrections (Lohmann 1998) whilst elements of the agenda are consistently reaffirmed in the face of criticism and counter-evidence⁶⁹.

On this view the problem-solution rhetoric is necessary to generate institutional momentum, build public support and harness capital to the cause. Yet as a system designed to extend the practice of market principles around the world, inequality and relative destitution are perceived as necessary by-products of its end-goal. Development is intended 'to deliver an exploitable global proletariat into the hands of capital' (Cammack 2002: 125-7) or else to continue producing 'the poor' as an observable, regulatable category in providing fuel for the developmental machine⁷⁰. Failures and falsehoods being constitutive of development's reproduction implies, critics argue, that in questioning the terms and conditions of development discourse one *participates* in that discourse and so perpetuates it by lending legitimacy to its mode of representation. Development should instead be treated as a *game* or a *drama*, a genre of *imaginative literature* indifferent to truth and falsity (Frank 1997, Lohmann 1998). Rather than criticising the production of untruths undertaken in its

from most developed country governments devoted to development assistance and that called for by the UN. In 1999 only 4 out of the 21 DAC (Development Assistance Committee) member countries contributed the 0.7% of GNP to Official Development Aid (ODA) called for by the UN, the average standing at 0.24% (European Union 1999). USAID (2001) meanwhile proudly declares that the US is 'spending less than one-half of 1 percent of the federal budget' on development assistance, stressing that it is the *quality* of aid that matters more than the quantity (USAID 2003a). This is of course an otherwise quite legitimate point, but one that is somewhat worthless if the *relative quantity* of the *good quality* aid is too small to make any significant difference. Although aid from these countries may have risen in real terms (allowing for inflation) over the decade 1990-2000, contributions from all countries except Japan fell as proportions of GNP, with those from the US, France and Germany falling by between 40% and 50% (OECD Observer 2001). Increasing poverty in the face of these development efforts is a commonly-accepted reality, from introductory texts (Todaro 2000) to Wolfesohn speeches (1998e).

⁶⁹ As with David Dollar and Aart Kray's (2001) paper for the World Bank asserting that anti-inflation policies – the manna of the Washington Consensus and neoliberal economic policies generally – are 'hyper-pro-poor'. The paper also argues that there is no evidence that direct investments in education and health improve the incomes of the poor; the implication of these remarks from a narrowly economic perspective on development would seemingly be that they therefore do not improve the well-being of the poor nor constitute development.

⁷⁰ Foreign aid is seen as becoming a 'habit-forming drug' as the impulse towards planning change is institutionalised, yet development is in the end only a process of 'poor people in rich countries giving money to rich people in poor countries', development being big business to all those involved in the 'developing' (Caufield 1997: 338).

name, the critic needs to cast off both the *rhetoric* and the *vision* of development (Hobart 1993, Sachs 1992, Lohmann 1998, Abrahamsen 2000)⁷¹.

Again things are rarely this simple, and to portray them as such is unproductive. Post-Development, as with Dependency Theory, can at times be too broad-sweeping in its critique, when what is needed is to act with a more critical and specific focus in order to locate possible spaces for productive engagement with the dominant discourse (cf. Diawara 2000). The “regime” of truth’ (Foucault 1984a: 74) dominant within development discourse has perhaps exhibited narrow conditions of truth production, restricting what might be regarded as admissible counter-evidence. Certain groups of actors and styles of discursive contribution positioned within development parameters may embody the contradictions and the obstinate disregard for counter-evidence that critics articulate. Yet we would in turn need to employ a very narrow understanding of development as a single specific and unified discursive project in order to assert that these conditions have held and will hold for all contributions.

Much post-development literature holds to such a monolithic characterisation of development discourse, making it more *anti*-development than *post*, as it fences off all possibilities of change and concludes that the only progressive step is to reject the discourse as a whole (Munck 1999). This is something that, when coming from a ‘First World’ perspective, can seem somewhat Eurocentric (Fagan 1999). The manner of eulogising the beautiful simple life of the ‘vernacular’ pre-development society (Rahnema 1997a, Illich 1997) can, when performed too casually, become as crass a counter-assertion as that which it seeks to criticise (the voice of the development expert portraying such a society as destitute). In this way post-development sometimes practises what it criticises in portraying development simply as an extension of colonial practice. Using crude conceptions of power and positioning those to-be-developed as entirely passive continues the process of turning people into objects (Brigg 2002, Hart 2001, Tucker 1999)⁷². Consequently many post-

⁷¹ This approach would appear to draw upon notions of hegemony as illustrated in the work of Laclau & Mouffe (2001: 139): ‘A hegemonic formation also embraces what opposes it., insofar as the opposing force accepts the system of basic articulations of that formation as something it negates, but the *place of the negation* is defined by the internal parameters of the formation itself’.

⁷² The strand of Post-Development discourse that decries development as the new colonial Westernisation uses a sovereign conception of power being held and exercised over the South by the North. Development is depicted as a solely *repressive* power, and the citing of Foucault in many such works appear as posturing rather than any serious attempt to analyse or ‘deconstruct’ the discourse of

development writings hold little in the way of positive suggestions, but rather remain in the realm of critique or outright rejection, the most positive options being perhaps to call for an 'aesthetic' grassroots effort to bring 'good people' to work together (Rahnema 1997: 399-400).

It is problematic to refer to a single development project given the complex assemblage of which the discursive field consists: contributions from various actor positions, social practices, institutions, rules and norms and regulatory and administrative interventions that construct the categories of the poor and developing countries as well as the means by which they are to be monitored, measured, and engaged with. It would be more productive to consider 'the dispersion of the points of choice that the discourse leaves free', the 'strategic possibilities' marked out within development conceived as an 'apparatus' (Foucault 1980: 194-5, 1972: 36-7, cf. Laclau & Mouffe 2001: 118, Escobar 1995, Brigg 2001, 2002). In this way we might criticise the sense of development discourse's having a determining logic (such as D=M=W), observing that the interplay of different elements within the apparatus can allow for a wide variety of representations and modifications. At the same time, we can admit that the assemblage has 'a dominant strategic function' in existing to respond to a perceived need, that of the 'assimilation of a floating population' of newly-liberated countries, turning 'the poor' into a regulatable mass of governable subjects (Foucault 1980a: 195, Rose 1999: 49). Instead of insisting that development is entirely resistant to counter-evidence and will carry on unaffected by critical contributions, it would be more productive to analyse how elements of the assemblage overlap and reinforce one another at points, but also come into contradiction at others, producing discontinuities and fractures within the dominant practice and so opening up spaces within which new ways of conceiving 'development' and 'the poor', new possibilities of resistance, can be explored⁷³.

development (see for example Rahnema 1997a, 1997b, cf. the critiques of Pieterse 2000: 180 and Brigg 2002: 422).

⁷³ Further, the idea that development is in some sense an aspect of modernisation need not be a damning critique. If we adopt a critical stance in arguing that Modernity is as yet still a negotiable and aspirational goal or an unfinished project (see for instance Latour 1993, Munck 1999, Foucault 1984b), then we might paraphrase Latour (1991) in saying that *we have never been developed*. The challenge is still to explore what development *is* and how we can become *more* developed in the manner we choose upon such reflection.

The analogy of development with drama is more interesting than Lohmann (1998) allows space for⁷⁴. Drama will often reflect something of its context of production, bringing the world onto the stage, and at the same time can have real social and political effects, spilling out from the stage into the world. The analogy can be useful in looking at how the World Bank has positioned itself as a key player in the development drama, writing parts for actors (by devising projects for corporations and investment capital), directing (states upon appropriate governance activities and how to play their lines to prospective investors), and acting (through the production of development knowledge and the direct impact of its loans). It can also be useful in thinking about how the discursive shifts considered here might orchestrate new scenes, new acts, or new *forms* of performance within the development drama; the analogy will be pursued in later chapters in asking what possibilities exist for changing the nature of the performance of development. If the development project is perceived to have failed at least in part insofar as it has been conceptualised and implemented in a top-down manner, then we need to consider what possibilities exist for bringing the audience (be that non-governmental organisations or other undefined civil society actor-networks) on-stage and turning the drama into something more akin to a piece of agit-prop performance art. The scripting of the piece might be reduced and a recognition of improvisation within it increased, producing the space for considering activities undertaken without external planning and intervention as forms of development worthy of assistance; what Susan Maiava (2002: 2-4) has described as opening up *Intentional* (grand-scale, top-down) Development to the *Immanent* or *Indigenous* development of 'what people are doing anyway' as agents of their own development⁷⁵.

⁷⁴ Other modes of practice have been characterised in a similar manner as endlessly failing, and *thriving* on their own failure (see Osborne 1996 on liberalism, Rose & Miller 1992 on government), but the authors wisely do not jump to the hasty conclusion that this means such practices are fundamentally flawed and better abandoned. This reflexive process is rather seen as lending to the strength of the practice, and making it a more interesting subject of study and critical engagement.

⁷⁵ For Maiava (2002: 2-4) this would require emptying ourselves of notions of what development *should* be, recognising indigenous efforts already being conducted by those to-be-developed, and working to support them. Attempts at doing this, she argues, could help to move intentional Development towards a point where the two meet.

Shifting Developmental Agendas and the 'Knowledge Revolution'

We might now usefully return to the trumpeted agenda of widening development objectives and ask what these shifts amount to. Importantly the *core* of the development narrative has seemingly remained the same insofar as non-economic factors are frequently referred to as merely supplementing economic considerations, economic growth still being an essential and necessary condition (Stiglitz 1997a, 2000a, Todaro 2000: 17-19, see also the criticism of Rahnema 2001: 4, Latouche 1997). It would seem that the most significant shift has been that the traditional development recipe now comes with added ingredients stirred into economic growth. Nonetheless these changes should not be dismissed. Given that the same actors (multilateral organisations and developed and developing country governments) operate upon the same scenery (national and international economies), that much of the performance's logic remains unaltered is perhaps less important than that such changes *have* been achieved. As Jan Nederveen Pieterse (1998: 358-360) notes, development is no longer monitored and measured solely by increases in GNP. People now count in some form in all development work and more inclusive development indices are widely respected and used – such as the UN's *Human Development Index*, included each year in its *Human Development Report*, a mainstream counter-voice to that of the World Bank's *World Development Report*. Pieterse characterises the big divide within development as now existing between social development, incorporating much of the mainstream as well as alternative development contributions, and the number-crunching approach. Institutionally, he says, the line can be drawn between the UN and the IMF, with the World Bank straddled precariously somewhere between the two.

James Wolfensohn's presidency at the Bank has certainly been marked by a professed leaning towards the 'alternative' development perspective⁷⁶. The direction of the Bank under Wolfensohn's tenure can be characterised as an attempt to bring onboard those who have previously stood against it as critics through the propagation of an ethos of renewal. This has consisted of seeking to redefine the development

⁷⁶ 'Two general attitudes prevail in development economics. One favors a hard-nosed – even fierce - approach, emphasizing sacrifices to be made ... Set against this is an alternative outlook that sees development as an essentially 'friendly' process, based on mutually beneficial exchange ... We lean towards this alternative outlook, but also agree that it must be reinforced by sound macroeconomic policies' (Wolfensohn & Sen 1999).

agenda and the Bank's place within it for the new millennium and the 'new' economy, scripting the Bank an adjusted *role* in development, a new *style* for performing that role, and finally also articulating new *content* that it will perform within the role. The idea has been to present a 'fundamental renewal' of the Bank (1999h), aspects of which will be considered in greater detail in the following chapters.

Firstly, then, the scenery on which development occurs has been argued to be changing, demanding the performance of a new role from the Bank amongst others (civil society and governments included). Wolfensohn (e.g. 1995, 1997a, 1998e, 1999g) commonly refers firstly to how official development assistance is declining whilst private capital investment flows to developing regions are massively increasing⁷⁷. This emphasises the need for the Bank and governments to try to 'integrate the private sector into economies' (Wolfensohn 1998e, cf. Stiglitz 1997a) so that investors act as part of the social sector and not just as profit seekers, whilst also creating secure structures for capital's free flow, within defined limits. Another frequent reference for Wolfensohn in this regard is the rise or 'explosion' of new civil society 'players' (Wolfensohn 1997d, 1995) on the development terrain, such that the group as a whole becomes an essential 'participant' and 'partner in the development process' (Wolfensohn 1998h). In response to the growing number of development actors the approach has been to decentralise Bank operations and to advertise its performance of a new role more as a catalyst or partner than as a leader of development efforts: '[f]or us, the future is the future of partnership' (Wolfensohn 1997c)⁷⁸.

Concern is expressed, secondly, over the need to change the Bank's style in performing its role, emphasising a concern with the *social* alongside the economic, and drawing upon the theme of partnership to stress a need for countries to *own* their

⁷⁷ In his first Annual Meetings Address Wolfensohn (1995) referred to private capital flows as being 'now three times official development assistance', further stressing however that over 80% of such flows go to only 12 countries and as such 'private investment is not yet the answer for these poorer countries', urging that the Bank needed to show donors that it was in their 'own self-interest to maintain an adequate level of support' for IDA. Many would agree with Wolfenson's remarks about private capital; Samir Amin (1997: 23-4) remarks that the entire UN system seems marginal by comparison to the Bank's funding and lending, but that bilateral funds are still more important than the amounts of capital dealt with by the Bretton Woods twins - and overall both these forms of aid constitute 'minor (non-negligible)' fractions of the capital market, which is dominated by private capital flows (cf. Jordan 2000, Wilks 1999a, World Bank 2000n). The subject also featured regularly in Stiglitz's speeches of the time (e.g. Stiglitz 1997a, 1997c, 1998a).

⁷⁸ 'Partner' or 'partnership' occurs in every speech recorded by James Wolfensohn on the Bank site from 1995 through to 1997, and very frequently after that.

development programmes rather than having them imposed from Washington. For Wolfensohn (1998e) the widening of development concerns addressed above mean that 'equity and social justice' need to be the main goals for taking development 'forward', ensuring social and educational systems exist to protect the vulnerable and enable *people* to develop. This involves renegotiating the relationship between the Bank, the state and civil society to stress inclusion and ownership, bringing people onboard in designing and implementing the development agenda of their country. This is a first step along the path that will be considered in more detail in the following chapters of playing down the Bank's role and stressing that development must come from the people: '...it is not for the World Bank to change the behavior of a country ... But what we can do at the Bank is to give a lead ... it becomes a symbolic act and means we are a very real partner' (Wolfensohn 1998c).

Finally, these changes in role and style mean that the Bank needs to bring a whole new content to the development stage. This is expressed through a will to cast off an old costume that has hung around its neck for the last decade, identifying it as an easy object of criticism, and to remould the organisation as a global development knowledge manager, a Knowledge Bank, the subject of the next chapter and beyond. Wolfensohn's presentations often function to embed and naturalise such new elements in the Bank's agenda – as above and as when the 'information gap' is inserted casually as a new variable into the standard statistical onslaught, framing new problems for developmenteers to engage with (Wolfensohn 1999h)⁷⁹. The work of Joseph Stiglitz (who was Vice President and Chief Economist at the World Bank from 1996 until late 1999) was also very influential in this regard, both in his academic work prior to assuming the post and his subsequent work for the Bank⁸⁰.

⁷⁹ 'In the developing world, with the exception of China, 100 million more people are living in poverty today than a decade ago. In at least 10 countries in Africa, the scourge of AIDS has reduced life expectancy by 17 years. More than 33 million cases of AIDS in the world, of which 22 million are in Africa. 1.5 billion people still lacking access to safe water and 2.4 million children who die each year of waterborne diseases. 125 million children still not in primary school. 1.8 million people who die annually of indoor air pollution. *A world where the information gap is widening*. And the forests are being destroyed at the rate of an acre a second.' (Wolfensohn 1999h, my emphasis).

⁸⁰ Stiglitz has a Nobel Prize for his work in economics dealing with the importance of knowledge and information in market systems, and the need for careful case-by-case negotiations of the state-market relationship rather than the application of a prescribed economic formula.

The old costume of the 'Washington Consensus' had surrounded the Bank since the phrase was coined by one of its officials in 1990⁸¹. Stiglitz joined the Bank criticising the Consensus that he felt had dominated thinking there as well as at the IMF and other multilateral organisations and Western governments since the beginning of the decade. As part of the scripting of renewal, both Wolfensohn and Stiglitz made noises of a break with the old consensus:

'Today, surely, it is time to retire once and for all that tired old phrase of the so-called Washington Consensus.' (Wolfensohn 1998d)

'The so-called "Washington consensus" of U.S. economic officials, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank was formed in the midst of ... serious problems. Now is a good time to re-examine this consensus ... essential ingredients were also left out or underemphasized by the Washington consensus' (Stiglitz 1998a)

Stiglitz warned in his first speech as the Bank's Chief Economist that 'there is a danger that the Washington consensus has become dogma and, as dogma, may sometimes be applied inappropriately' (Stiglitz 1997a)⁸². He argued that this neo-liberal economic doctrine was breaking down and that a shift was taking place towards a 'post-Washington Consensus' (see Stiglitz 1997b, 1997f). The *post-Washington Consensus* was given headline status in Stiglitz's work early the next year (Stiglitz 1998a), said to be based on 'a better understanding of what makes markets work well', a recognition of their dependence upon state frameworks and other social institutions to enable their functioning; and thus of (limited) areas where state action is preferable to the direct use of markets. The broadening of the development agenda (especially emphasises upon sustainability, equality and democracy) was positioned in partnership with a recognition of the need for state

⁸¹ John Williamson (2000 2002) used the phrase to explain what he felt was a consensus emerging within the multilateral organisations as to the best set of policies for Latin American countries as of 1989. He listed a series of ten points framed around macroeconomic discipline, economic openness, and the establishment of a market system.

⁸² Stiglitz was critical of the IMF's unquestioning focus on trade and capital account liberalisation in all cases, which he saw as laying the foundations for a crisis in the case of East Asian economies in particular. Once the short-term capital investments and real estate bubbles burst and the East Asian economies faced a severe economic downturn, he was more openly critical of the IMF's insistence upon economic austerity measures as a 'solution' (tightening monetary policy and keeping budgets balanced rather than allowing for the emergence of a temporary budget deficit to ride out the economic storm). This placed him in a difficult position with regard to the Bank's leadership as well as the IMF's and the US treasury, leading to his eventual departure from the Bank, as detailed in the following chapter.

instruments to promote effective market-functioning and effective regulation of competition and financial flows (Stiglitz 1998a)⁸³.

Stiglitz has since been criticised by the term's creator amongst others (Williamson 2000: 254-6, 2002) for attacking a neoliberal straw-doll⁸⁴. On this view the Consensus was never more than a speech-friendly brand name that filled an ideological vacuum and characterised the decade, with many policy practices having little more in common than that they were designated by proponents and detractors alike as Consensus policies (Naím 2000: 506-8, 2002). Even so, Stiglitz's public distancing of both himself and the Bank from the Consensus worked as a rhetorical tool to signify a break with past practices and past criticism. Whatever the Consensus may have been intended to signify, the position that Stiglitz criticised was that which the Bank was perceived to occupy, by its critics at least, and so this burning of the effigy of the Consensus functioned as one part in the ritual of renewal we will be considering, to clear the air for talk of new initiatives, partnerships and a new Bank.

Further recent shifts in development agendas have centred around the changes considered in the previous two chapters concerning the importance of information and knowledge, the embeddedness of (tacit) knowledge in the country's people and their interaction, and the efficacy of encouraging horizontalised, decentralised and networked modes of organisation in such a global project. Achieving universal basic education is now a central concern of all organisations subscribing to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG 2001b), whilst for a major international research, policy campaign and development organisation such as Oxfam International (www.oxfam.org) knowledge-related issues touch all of its three headline campaigns for 2003⁸⁵. US Treasury Secretary Paul O'Neill (2001) has meanwhile pushed a Knowledge Bank-friendly line in linking increased productivity to 'expanding human

⁸³ Stiglitz was not alone in this approach within the Bank; Burki and Perry's 1998 Latin America and Caribbean Department publication *Beyond the Washington Consensus: Institutions Matter* indicated that forms of new institutional economic thinking were becoming reasonably well embedded within the Bank.

⁸⁴ Williamson (2000: 254) has argued that the term was always meant to be 'geographically and historically specific' (to the best set of policies for Latin America in 1989), and specifically did *not* include certain neoliberal policy proposals such as capital account liberalisation, for fear of inducing or exacerbating events such as the East Asian crisis (cf. Naím 2000, 2002).

⁸⁵ These three campaigns centre around providing universal basic education, ensuring intellectual property rights legislation does not impact negatively upon the poor, and making international trade more fair (which includes dealing with the impact of intellectual property rights on the right to manufacture more affordable versions of copyrighted drugs in developing countries).

skills and knowledge' and stressing that the Bank's loan portfolio for education projects must be dramatically expanded. The postulated information and knowledge divides receive attention as being inseparable from the economic, with all the hopes and dangers indicated in the previous chapter of being left behind to end up as excluded Fourth World zones in the new economy or of leapfrogging industrialisation to take a lead in the hi-tech sector (G8 2000).

In the previous chapter we saw criticisms levelled that the knowledge economy stands to promote a new international division of labour wherein poorer countries' economies serve the capital-generating activities of the richer for minimal recompense, turning the focus of economic activity around to ensure that the more developed nations maintain their competitive advantage. The application of development thinking to knowledge economy concerns could thus be read as evidence of its 'imperialistic' tendencies, facilitating a new manner of exploitation that functions under the promise of future rewards. Through this shift in economic discourse can be seen a pattern of change and repetition in development discourse as countries come to be perceived as informationalised and informationalising, whilst development critics begin to speak, in effect, of being *under*-informationalised. Indeed Stiglitz, for his part, in his emphasis upon bringing developing countries into the scientific age, draws uncomfortably close to implying 'traditional' peoples as the world's children, students of a better Western way of knowing. In commenting upon the Bank's contributions to this discursive shift, Stiglitz stresses that as well as government 'policies to facilitate the transfer of technology', a 'transformation of society' is necessary to facilitate the new development agenda – a shift away from traditionalist perspectives towards a 'scientific mentality' (Stiglitz 1998a, 1998h, 2000c). The implication is that the person with a scientific approach is freer to question and to learn, and that 'once one begins to question traditional beliefs, change is inevitable' (Stiglitz 1998h, 2000c). Stiglitz's remarks could be seen as evidencing the imperialistic representation of the Western scientist as 'superior knowing expert ... and the people being developed as ignorant passive recipients or objects of this knowledge' (Hobart 1993: 5).

Yet in stressing that these changes in mindset have to come from within the subject, Stiglitz (2000c: 18) also draws a fine line between his approach and that of the critic, focussing upon enabling learning rather than merely demonstrating the truth. This

facilitating role fits well within a developmental outlook which is more open and underdetermined than the critical position indicates. Insofar as development functions as a tool of modernisation, and knowledge and information have become discursive foci in the contemporary stage of modernity, it is entirely appropriate that development discourse has adopted these concerns as its own. Much as the notion of the knowledge society can work as a rhetorical device, as noted in Chapter Three, heightening awareness and prioritisation of knowledge economy concerns, so the discursive practice of development could also function rhetorically in stressing to its developing country audience and participants that they need to perform under the new mode of competition if they hope to achieve other developmental aims. Such discursive manoeuvres are dangerous insofar as the production of a new international division of labour is one possibility, but they are not inherently bad in that this is a possibility (however heavily the odds are weighted) and not a determined outcome. The discourse could also enable countries to unlock their 'human' capital and benefit from competing in a new and growing economic area. To what extent the Bank's performance of this discourse is potentially enabling and/or constraining for the countries to be 'developed' ('informationalised') will be the subject of the remaining chapters.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen that 'development' is a complex and shifting assemblage of multiple discursive practices, an 'apparatus' of development that is dominated but not over-determined by concerns of modernisation, integration and economic growth. Reductive critiques of development as a single cohesive entity produce weak arguments by avoiding engagement with this complexity and the open and underdetermined situations it produces, presuming too simple a relation between dominant influences and the substance of developmental discursive practice. The practice of development has faced crises induced by the disparity between its projected hopes and the failure indicated in its own statistical constructions. In response the discursive practice of development has become one of adjustment, broadening the manner in which it is conceived to include new variables that contextualise do not diminish the central importance of economic 'development' or growth. The latest adjustments to development discourse have seen the adoption of

knowledge economy concerns such as bridging various divides in the hope of leapfrogging, the prospects and dangers of intellectual property rights, and the importance of universal basic education.

The World Bank has similarly adopted an 'alternative' development agenda, and has most recently turned to the meeting of development and the knowledge economy. The shifts in emphasis at the Bank considered in Part Two are in part a reaction to questions which have surrounded it since its origin, but that have become increasingly problematic in recent years. These have affected its operational capacities in increasing the hostility and resistance it faces and as well as the reluctance of donor governments to fulfil their funding roles. The Bank has been criticised for spreading itself too widely without analysing whether it had a comparative advantage in the fields in question (Caufield 1997: 309, Wilks 2001a). Expansions in the Bank's programmes have been argued to occur solely as reactions to criticism, as attempts to put right its belated recognition of an issue's importance, or out of an unwillingness (by the Bank or its major Northern donors) to accept new major players onto the multilateral development organisation terrain. In Part Two, having surveyed here the state of knowledge economy and development discursive practices, we move on to consider the Bank's efforts to remould itself as a global *knowledge management* and a *knowledge for development* organisation playing a central role at the juncture of these discourses. Current efforts to reform and redirect the organisation could be regarded as being made in response to the critical comments noted above, aiming to redefine the Bank in a meta-governance role, decentralising operations and outsourcing work to semi-independent organisations, whilst establishing and contributing to the practices and governance of more and less independent actor-networks. In shaping discursive developments and the development terrain itself through its intellectual contributions, educational projects and choices of partnership, the Bank could draw back from the over-stretched positioning it is perceived as occupying to participate in the reproduction of a division of labour within a development community based around shared discursive norms and standards. This would, as we will see, rightly be the subject of much caution and criticism, but could also hold some slim potential for opening the organisation up to become a more open, dialogic space within which *developments* other than the

hegemonic form of grand-scale economic Development might benefit from the flows of financial and intellectual resources associated with the Bank.

PART TWO:
Programmes of Renewal: the World Bank as a Distant Gatekeeper

Programmes of Renewal and the Emergence of the Knowledge Bank

Introduction

This first chapter of Part Two will trace the emergence of the Knowledge Bank agenda through a series of reforms initiated under the new President, James Wolfensohn, as from 1996. What I shall call Wolfensohn's Project of Renewal was designed to personalise the development story and present the Bank as the friendly face of development; putting smiles on the faces of children through its focus upon participation, ownership and consensus rather than the harsh financial face it had for years personified for its critics. Elements of the Bank's history and politics will be summarised in outlining the context of the Renewal, and three programmes from within it will be considered in noting how the organisation endeavours to position itself centrally within a 'new' development through a series of problematisations.

The Bank's discursive practice of Renewal is noted to incorporate something of all four streams of knowledge economy/society discourse mentioned in Chapter Two, within two dominant senses of the Knowledge Bank. Firstly a Knowledge for Development Bank (K4DB)⁸⁶ bringing together something of the *post-industrial* and *futurist* tendencies, concerned with the increasing importance of acquiring and using knowledge for economic activities and hence for development. Secondly a Knowledge Management and Networking Bank (KMNB) concerned with the need to decentralise operations, to outsource and partner in seeking to maximise efficacy and efficiency and to coordinate this dispersal of operations through management of the development players involved and the knowledge and information they produce. The concern to become a global knowledge management organisation is a central thread weaving together the programmes of the Wolfensohn Project.

⁸⁶ This acronym is an adaptation of the Bank's own K4D branding used in the 'K4D Program' and 'K4D Community' of the World Bank Institute, discussed in the next chapter.

The following chapter will consider the KMNB whilst this chapter will focus upon the K4DB in terms of what knowledge and information are for the Bank and how it sees itself as using them in its development endeavours. The *World Development Report 1998/99: Knowledge for Development* (World Bank 1998a) launched this new image to a global audience, and so forms the subject of the second part of the chapter. One dominant trend within the Bank's performance of 'knowledge for development' is observed to involve the conflation of information and knowledge, in conceptualising a commodifiable form of capital, within an extension of liberal economic discourse. This is argued to tend towards reproducing several governmental knowledge economy/society discursive trends through the lens of a broadening development agenda (leapfrogging, intellectual property rights, and expanding the realms of potential capital activities). The presence of, and potential for, developing alternative perspectives and so encouraging greater difference within the patterns of repetition, is also considered here and again in greater detail in Chapter Six.

Origins, Structure and Governance of the World Bank: Actor-Networks and Project-Networks

The World Bank is the largest and oldest of the multilateral development banks⁸⁷. Its first and main arm (the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, IBRD) was established when its constitutional Articles of Agreement were signed at the Bretton Woods meetings in 1944⁸⁸. The World Bank Group also comprises in the main four other distinct organisational bodies: the International Development Agency (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Investments Guarantees Agency (MIGA) and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). 'World Bank' refers to the combined actions of the IBRD and IDA,

⁸⁷ Other multilateral development banks include the Inter-American Development Bank established in 1959, the African Development Bank in 1963, the Caribbean Development Bank in 1970, and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, created in 1981.

⁸⁸ The Articles of Agreement of the IMF and IBRD were adopted at Bretton Woods in July 1944 by a meeting of forty-five governments, but it was nearly eighteen months later before these became effective after being signed by twenty-eight governments. The Bank was not on the main agenda of the meetings, but Catherine Gwin (1997: 197-8) argues that plans for an international bank to facilitate investment flows by sharing in private investors' risks had been a pet U.S. government project since 1941, and so the notion was bound to arise at such a significant gathering. Gwin cites the then US Treasury Secretary's stated aim as being to move the financial centre of the world 'from London and Wall Street to the United States Treasury' (the IBRD's chosen base was Washington), much to the chagrin of other attendees whose position was weakened by the fact that the US was fronting up most of the initial capital.

whilst 'World Bank Group' refers to all five bodies. IBRD is the main lending body of the Bank Group and IDA acts as the soft-loan adjunct of its operations. By 'in the main' I refer to the fact that over the years the Group has become involved in partnerships, and has established and housed within itself an array of organisations with varying degrees of autonomy. In so doing it has constructed, coordinated and embedded itself within a series of extended development networks. Below is given a very brief outline of the five main bodies' functions, before we return to this point.

IBRD makes loans at near-commercial rates to developing countries for projects and economic adjustment programmes; it is currently made up of 184 member countries (World Bank 2003a) which are ascribed Part I or Part II status according to whether they are creditors or borrowers respectively. Only member countries can borrow, and becoming a member involves making a contribution to IBRD's capital base⁸⁹. IBRD loans are made at near-market rates to middle-income countries and poorer countries with secure credit histories (it will also lend to private enterprises in a member country if the government agrees to be a guarantor)⁹⁰. The IDA is a soft-loan window of the IBRD, established in 1960, that provides long-term capital loans at concessional rates to the poorest countries. Seventy-nine countries, accounting for just over half the total population of developing countries, are eligible to borrow from IDA (2.3 billion people or 53%, World Bank 2001f). IDA is funded mostly by contributions ('replenishments') from the governments of Part I member countries.

IFC, MIGA and ICSID are all stressed to have their own capital bases and country membership, but to share in the Bank 'development mandate' of promoting economic growth in developing countries (World Bank 1998f: vii-ix). The IFC, established in 1956, is commissioned to catalyse private sector investment in developing countries

⁸⁹ Countries do this by buying shares up to a level denoted by an assessment of the size and state of the country's economy. Countries only pay in a proportion (about 7%) of the shares' denoted cost, with the remainder being held in reserve as 'callable capital' (Thibodeau 1996), guaranteed to be paid on demand if the Bank requires funds due to defaulting debtors or a collapse in its credit rating.

⁹⁰ In its original manifestation the Bank was intended for post-war reconstruction of European economies damaged by the war, but soon after its establishment it became clear that this job would require resources far outstripping those of the Bank. IBRD made its first loan, to France, in March 1947. Within a month of this first approval, US Secretary of State George Marshall proposed the European Recovery Program – the Marshall Plan – and as a consequence the Bank began to turn its attention to the development field. In March 1948 it made its first loan to a developing country (Chile), and in September 1950 made its first loan to an African country in lending to Ethiopia (Kapur et al. 1997b: 1217-1220).

and build confidence in areas for investment through its participation (World Bank 2003b). It has been argued that the IDA and IFC were established as political concessions to divert attention from a UN initiative (the Special UN Fund for Economic Development, SUNFED, established in 1959) working on a one country – one vote basis (Kapur et al. 1997c: 152-4, 1171, cf. Gwin 1997, Caufield 1997, Bello 1999)⁹¹. MIGA became fully operational in 1988, its role being to facilitate international investment flows by offering political risk insurance covering expropriation, civil disturbances and currency inconvertibility. MIGA is comparatively small compared with other Bank Group organisations⁹². ICSID was created in 1966, again with the intention of promoting international investment-capital flows. The purpose in this instance was to provide facilities for the reconciliation and arbitration of investment disputes between member countries and investors from other member countries. ICSID presents itself as ‘one of the main mechanisms’ for settling investment disputes under four multilateral trade and investment treaties⁹³ and dealing with ‘over 900 bilateral investment treaties’ (World Bank 2003e), positioning it as a significant player in negotiating the terms of market governance and regulation.

This outline gives a first indication of how the Bank Group, and the Bank, might better be conceived as an *assemblage* of actors rather than a simple *actor* as such. The Bank could then be considered as a network of actors, except that within each of these ‘actors’ lies a host of programmes and initiatives bound formally by the Bank’s minimally-defined mandate, interacting with other parts of the organisation, and with parts of other organisations, both within and without the Bank Group (something that will be explored further in Chapter Six)⁹⁴. We might then think of the Bank as a composite or ‘network of networks’ (Castells 2000b: 22). Yet although this would

⁹¹ The IFC and IDA were both proposed in 1951 by an advisory group to President Truman, in what is argued to have been a means of strengthening underdeveloped countries seen as strategically important to the US in gaining an advantage over the Soviets during the Cold War (Gwin 1997: 205).

⁹² In 1999 MIGA was made up of less than 100 staff and a capital stock of \$1 billion (Bank Information Center 1999a: 4). Nonetheless it advertises itself as having facilitated an estimated \$41 billion in Foreign Direct Investments (World Bank 2003c).

⁹³ The North American Free Trade Agreement, the Energy Charter Treaty, the Cartagena Free Trade Agreement and the Colonia Investment Protocol of Mercosur.

⁹⁴ The Bank is, for instance, organised into six operational regions, each with its own Vice-President (Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East and North Africa, East Asia and the Pacific, Europe and Central Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and South Asia) as well as the five networks that will be discussed in the next chapter, and a number of other organisational units responsible for coordinating operations, external relations and organisational evaluations (Operations Policy and Strategy (OPS), Operational Core Services (OCS), External Affairs and United Nations Affairs (EXT), and the Operations Evaluation Department (OED)).

seem to capture more effectively the multiple levels of association that can be seen within and around it, we need also remember that the Bank and the Group *can* still speak with one voice – for formal occasions, programme statements, or the front-page of its website for instance – reminding us of the organisation’s actor-face.

As Latour (1999: 19) has remarked of the agency/structure debate, it might be better to refuse the apparent contradictions of the actor and/or network, thinking of these as but ‘two faces of the same phenomenon’ and moving on to consider how ideas and practices circulate within, outside, across and through the boundaries that formally designate ‘the Bank’ or ‘the Group’. Similarly in speaking of the Bank’s programmes of action the categories of projects and networks break down to become poles within a space of what I will term *project-networks*. ‘Projects’ depend upon establishing connections between different groups of actors inside and outside the Bank, and ‘networks’ display something of the programmatic substance and structured governance expected more of a specific project. Often, as will be shown in the following chapters, Bank-fostered ‘network’s are developed as projects and opened up to external partnership only once their mode of operation has been reasonably well established, a point which both stems from and lends itself towards the maintenance and management of a single identifiable public ‘face’ of the organisation. These conceptual-terminological pointers are useful in thinking about the multiple ‘Knowledge Bank’ discourses considered in this chapter, as well as in addressing the politics of networks and questions of how to open the Bank up to critical engagement in later chapters.

Dominant Influences upon the Bank

‘... the Bank is not a monolith and significant differences of emphasis exist, even among major documents.’ (Stern 1993: 23)

The Bank describes itself as a ‘global cooperative’ owned by its members (World Bank 2002d, 1999e). Its governance structure comprises, in descending order of seniority, a Board of Governors (one per member-country, usually senior financial executives and ministers), a Board of twenty-four Executive Directors to whom the Governors delegate their power, and then Bank management. The Board of Governors meets once a year, each Governor having two hundred and fifty ‘basic

votes', plus one for each stock-share the country has bought as its contribution to the IBRD's capital base⁹⁵. The G-8 countries hold just over 45% of IBRD and IDA votes, with the US having the largest shareholding, enough to guarantee it a veto on changes to the Bank's Articles of Agreement (16.39% of IBRD and 13.88% of IDA as of November 2003, World Bank 2003r). The Executive Directors then oversee the Bank's work more closely, meeting several times a week to review loan projects and policies and reporting back to the Governors. The five member countries with the largest voting share nominate a member directly to the Board of Executive Directors – the US, Japan, Germany, France, and the UK – and three more countries have sufficient voting power to choose to represent themselves (China, Saudi Arabia and the Russian Federation). This leaves 176 countries forming voting blocs to select their representative from the sixteen remaining seats, in both the IBRD and IDA (World Bank 2003r)⁹⁶. In theory a hierarchical chain of monitoring and responsibility operates through Executive Directors – management – staff. However the Directors have been argued to be too distant both from Bank operations and from the many countries some of them represent, rubber-stamping an increasing number of decisions as the Bank's mandate widens, and doing little in the way of monitoring or control (Woods 2001: 84-7, Ascher 1983).

Although the Group's heterogeneity complicates speaking of 'the Bank' as a subject in its own right, a limited set of cultural norms and practices *do* carry through its operations with enough dominance to justify addressing key manoeuvres, such as those considered in this work, as representative of the Bank or the Group as a whole⁹⁷. Notes of caution have been aired against seeing the Bank as a machine

⁹⁵ The basic votes were a nominal gesture of formal equality instituted at the Bank's creation; the importance of these basic votes has varied over time, with their relative decline over the past 45 years indicating the growing centralization of Bank control in the Northern countries. Basic votes initially accounted for 11.3% of the total voting power in 1946, rising to 14% by 1955, and now constituting roughly a mere 3% (Woods 2000: 828; 2001: 87).

⁹⁶ For instance, in 2001 Bassary Toure from Mali could cast 2.01% of the total votes in speaking for 24 countries (World Bank 2000j: 119-120). The politics of the voting structure is highlighted by noting that at the time of the Bank's establishment several countries wished to contribute more and thereby have a larger say in the institution's running, but were disallowed: 'Australia, France, India, and Iran ... each insisted on recording their complaint of an inadequate quota' (Woods 2000: 828-30).

⁹⁷ For instance the IFC, ICSID and MIGA are formally 'legally separate' from the Bank (IBRD and IDA) with their own governing boards (Bank Information Center 1999a: 2), although this separation can in many senses be regarded as merely a technical formality. Legal separation allows each institution to pursue distinct (and perhaps conflicting) policy paths given their different client bases, and gives independence to their credit ratings such that other group members are not affected by borrowers defaulting on IBRD or IDA debts. However the President and Board Members of the Bank, IFC and MIGA are 'identical' (Bank Information Center 1999a: 2). The Bank's President is also Chairman of

working systematically in the interests of capital; because of 'disconnect' within the Bank hierarchy it is argued that the organisation *cannot* be dominated solely by Northern donor opinions and agendas (Rich 2002: 50-1)⁹⁸. Furthermore the organisation's size, management structures, and strong organisational culture mean that outside influences are frequently transformed when taken onboard by the Bank, and the diversity of voices active within the organisation mean it needs to be read at an internal level as a complex meeting of divergent interests (cf. Leiteritz 2002, Bebbington et al. forthcoming). Yet however indirect the outcome, the Bank is heavily influenced by Northern governmental-economic interests out of a pragmatic concern for self-preservation. Major statements of intent such as Presidential speeches and the annual *World Development Report* might thus be read as expressing a form of 'intellectual consensus' (Ascher 1983: 425). Three threads of influence could be identified as the professional-cultural, personal-presidential, and political-financial.

Considering firstly the *professional-cultural* influences, it has been noted that from wherever they may originate, the great majority of Bank staff are *educated* in the United States and the UK in economics (Stern & Ferreira 1993, cf. Wade 2001a)⁹⁹. This dominance of staff from the same educational background helps contextualise the emergence of an epistemological consensus around market-led economic growth as the most effective means of achieving development, and the marginalisation or exclusion of alternative voices. This can be illustrated through a series of four dismissals, reprimands, or exclusions that have been exercised over staff in recent years. The first of these involves a name that has recurred a number of times so far in our exploration, that of the Bank's former Vice President and Chief Economist, Joseph Stiglitz. Having been critical of the IMF's 'Washington Consensus'-style approach to the East Asian economic crisis, Stiglitz left the Bank having officially

ICSID's Administrative Council and its Secretary-General is the World Bank's Legal Vice President (World Bank 2003e). The Council consists of one representative from each state which has signed up to its convention; all members must also be members of the Bank, and by default each country's Bank Governor is also their Council representative unless another preference is declared (World Bank 2003e).

⁹⁸ Disconnects between Executive Board government representatives and Bank managers, Washington-based and country-based staff, policy and project staff. For instance Ascher (1983: 423-436) notes that policy and project staff have wide discretion as to how orders are 'absorbed' and adapted to leave little trace of the intended change. Staff are also argued to have an 'information advantage' over managers which facilitates this absorption, passing appropriate feedback up the monitoring chain whilst little changes on the ground. Thirdly, staff often contribute to shifts in development thinking from their areas of expertise, making 'influential declaratory statements as to what types of policy are necessary and desirable' (Woods 2000: 833, cf. 2001).

⁹⁹ The ratio of economists to non-economists has been estimated at around 28:1 (Malhotra 1999: 42).

'resigned' in November 1999 amid widespread speculation based on unconfirmed reports that Lawrence Summers, then US Secretary to the Treasury, had asked for Stiglitz to be silenced on threat of President Wolfensohn abandoning hopes of gaining a second term in office (Moberg 2000, Ambrose 2000a). Stiglitz was kept on as a special advisor to Wolfensohn, but after classifying IMF staff as 'third-rank students from first-rate universities' in a periodical article (Stiglitz 2000b) all official contact between Stiglitz and the Bank was terminated, to more widespread claims from critics that this was the doing of Summers.

Lawrence Summers held Stiglitz's position at the Bank from 1991 to 1993 during a policy period dominated by Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) and so-called 'Washington Consensus' thinking. Summers became infamous in the critical community for a leaked internal memo in 1991 arguing that the Bank should encourage the migration of dirty industries to developing countries on the basis that it made good economic sense (see e.g. George & Sabelli 1994: 96-111, Whirled Bank 2001)¹⁰⁰. Following the leaking of the memo it was explained as an idle thought experiment, but the moment nonetheless defined his tenure for external critics, and as Clinton's US Secretary to the Treasury the face of Summers has remained prominent in the minds of those who complain that the US maintains an overweening influence over the Bank. A catchphrase portrayal of the Knowledge Bank agenda might be seen as an attempt to strengthen the Bank's 'friendly' *Stiglitz* (social development) face over and against the more strictly financial *Summers* 'bank' face that has characterised it over the past twenty years especially. It is not so much Summers or Stiglitz in themselves that are important, as the caricatures they perform of different camps within the Washington-based governmental-economic elite.

The second example of professional-cultural influence involves Ravi Kanbur, who was brought to the Bank by Stiglitz in 1998 to be the lead writer for the *World Development Report 2000/2001: Attacking Poverty* (World Bank 2000v). By mid-2000, some months before the Report's publication, Kanbur had resigned and written a letter to the Bank's management expressing concerns about unreasonable attempts

¹⁰⁰ Because economic costs in terms of lost earnings from pollution would be less in countries with lower incomes; because the marginal costs of incremental increases in pollution would be less in countries that are to begin with less polluted; and finally because the demand for a clean environment will have a high income elasticity and so demand for industries to use costly pollution-reducing technologies would be much higher in the richer countries.

to tone down its criticism of the effects of globalisation on the poor. Once again those in the critical community claimed that it was Summers who had been involved in re-writing these sections (Wilks 2000). Thirdly and fourthly are two cases that made the Bank's own Staff Association Newsletter (World Bank Staff Association 2001: 1-2). William Easterly was a senior research officer at the Bank who had an editorial published in the *Financial Times* for a book in which he criticised the major post-war development strategies for their ineffectiveness. The book had been written with support from the Bank (allowances for writing on paid-time and the book sold in the Bank's store), and the editorial was marked as personal opinion. He was nonetheless put on leave without pay for two months by the Bank's Ethics Office for having disregarded 'Media Guidelines', before finding other work. Ashraf Ghani was also put on leave without pay for an opinion piece in the *Financial Times*. He was later supported by James Wolfensohn and reinstated, but the Staff Association Newsletter was strongly critical of whether these cases indicated that staff were supposed to 'check their civil rights at the door when they join the Bank Group'. Other senior Bank staff have meanwhile written of these affairs that 'the Bank is a raucous debating society', in comparison to the IMF at least, and that the mentioned exits would have been unnecessary 'if the transgressors had shown a little more decorum and restraint' (Ellerman 2001: 3)¹⁰¹. This illustrates how whilst Bank culture by no means over-determines the work of its staff, and many pockets of independent thought will survive, the predominance of one particular mindset *will* serve to make it harder for dissenting voices to be heard and given their due – with even generous critics seeing their voices of dissent as lacking decorum.

Speculation upon the Summers-Wolfensohn relationship highlights the second notion of *personal-presidential* influences upon the Bank. The Bank's location in Washington further embeds cultural and personal influences upon the organisation, as well as the US's choosing every Bank President. Finally, the standing of 'majority voting' or veto

¹⁰¹ Ellerman, a senior economist within the Bank, has commented of the departures of Stiglitz, Kanbur and Easterly that outsiders might see the Bank as comparable to 'the Catholic Church at the time of the Spanish Inquisition', perhaps in reference to Susan George and Fabrizio Sabelli's highly-regarded work *Faith and Credit* (1994: 5), which made use of the analogy in referring to a 'rigidly structured hierarchy preaching and imposing' its doctrine with a 'quasi-religious mode of self-justification'. Ellerman (2001: 3-4) is also more critical at times in this piece, warning of the dangers of the Bank adopting Official Views, thus mixing truth and power in such ways as that 'critical reason gives way to bureaucratic conformity; a community of development researchers gives way to a company of intellectual clerks; and honest and open debate gives way to an organizational ideal of agreement, accommodation, and "playing with the team"'.

privileges ensure that the buck for all fundamental decisions regarding the Bank stops with the US, the only country with sufficient votes to hold a veto. The cut-off point for making changes to the Bank's Articles of Agreement, its core constitution, was originally set at 80% of votes on the Board of Executive Directors, with the US holding safely over 20% of votes. As the US drew close to no longer holding 20% of votes through reductions in its contributions and a rise in the number of new members, it pushed to raise the majority voting level for such changes to 85% and so maintain its veto position, before selling some of its votes to China in 1997 (Woods 2000: 833, Gwin 1997: 238). These examples drive the argument that for as long as the Bank is housed in the US, which holds veto over major organisational changes and nominates every Bank President, and as long as it draws heavily upon Northern academic institutions for its staff, the organisation is unlikely ever to grow too distant from the foreign policy lines of its major Northern donors.

The *political-financial* aspects of influences upon the Bank concern its establishing flows of investment capital North-South-North through development projects. Many critics have pointed out how much the governments of Northern countries gain from World Bank operations in developing countries. These dominant shareholding members are often home to the largest corporations that can win production contracts associated with project loans, those who can profit from investing in Bank bonds, and the financial speculators who can benefit from the liberalisation of capital markets that the Bank and IMF have attached as conditionalities to loans in the past (Woodward 1998: 46, Korten 1995)¹⁰². Furthermore, around 80% of the consultancy jobs needed to establish Bank projects are carried out by Northern consultants. The argument is that the Bank's most powerful members gain contracts 'roughly in proportion to their shareholdings in the Bank', and once consultancy work and interest payments to bondholders are factored in, Northern countries make a clear financial benefit from Bank-style 'development' (Caufield 1997: 243-9)¹⁰³.

¹⁰² In putting work out to tender the Bank discounts bids from the borrowing country's firms by 10-15% so as to give them a better chance of competing with international corporations; but even so, only around 44% of payments go to local firms (mostly for construction work), with the rest going to foreign companies mainly from donor countries (Korten 1995: 81). The Bank has before now been sold as a great deal for the US by investment companies in terms of contracts obtained for project work. See Thibodeau (1996) for a critical reaction to this point from a Republican (CATO Institute) perspective.

¹⁰³ A 'private sector agenda' has been argued to predominate within the Bank because of the fast growth of MIGA and the IFC in comparison to the IBRD and IDA (Durbin 1998: 1, cf. Bank Information Center 1999a, Wilks 1999a). Gwin (1997: 270-1) further cites a 1982 US Treasury Report noting that the multilateral development banks have contributed to 'the achievement of our global economic and

Programmes of Renewal

A question which recurs throughout literature upon the Bank, given the assemblage of Northern economic interests who can potentially benefit from its work, is whether it ultimately ought to be seen - and whether it sees itself - as a bank or a development organisation (e.g. see Amin 1997: 24, Birdsall 2000, Bello 1999, Korten 1995)¹⁰⁴. Referring back to observations made in the previous chapter, the supposed tension between these two roles can be better conceived as existing between the Bank's practising different understandings of development, since in its more dominant Northern-governmental economic varieties the roles of 'bank' and 'development organisation' can become barely distinguishable. The Bank's position seems ambiguous at least in part because a variety of individually modified 'development's are practised within its broad frame. Yet poverty and debt are the Bank's business, and without these it would have to either radically change its operations or cease to exist. In terms of measuring World Bank performance, then Vice President for Development Policy Jo Ritzen (2000: 1) stressed in a speech that the 'ultimate measure' of performance must be 'development – and more specifically, poverty alleviation'. He then quickly added that a second important measure must be the 'rate of return on equity', given that 'a necessary condition for the institution's survival' is that it maintains its status as a sound investment for bond holders¹⁰⁵. Yet even with this concern to ensure the North makes good financial returns on its endeavours, a pattern of unwillingness to fulfil the periodical replenishments of IDA funds has emerged in the US political system ever since the second such set of donations (Gwin 1997: 209).

In June 1995 James Wolfensohn acceded to the Bank's Presidency, taking control of an organisation 'in crisis' (Rich 2002: 27, 2000, Caufield 1997: 310-3); facing problems with renewals of IDA funding and critical reviews of poor project

financial objectives and thereby...our long term political/strategic interests', indicating the political-financial stakes placed in the Bank.

¹⁰⁴ This relates in turn to whether the Bank's main clients are its donor governments, borrower governments, private capital interests or the poor (Rich 2002: 51-2). Wolfensohn (1997i) has previously referred to 'the 4.7 billion people who are my clients' whilst other Bank documentation refers to client *countries* (Ritzen 2000).

¹⁰⁵ The Bank has made a profit every year since its establishment, and holds an AAA credit rating on US markets (World Bank 1999e, 2000n, BIC 1999b).

achievement records and budget overruns¹⁰⁶, and struggling to reposition itself in a development world increasingly dominated by private capital flows, as mentioned in the previous chapter. The Bank had been much criticised in the past for displaying arrogance, secrecy and intellectual bullheadedness which were seen as resulting in failed projects and policy programmes (see for instance George & Sabelli 1994, Caufield 1997, Amin 1997, Strange 1996, Mehta 1999a, 1999b, Fine 1999, Caddell 1999, Wade 2002a, 2001a, Rich 1994, Korten 1995). In part due to such criticism from both within and without, reform had already become an organisationally-normalised phenomena, with the Bank undergoing a series of at least five substantial reorganisations focused upon re-thematising and re-prioritising its organisational structure and operations (cf. Pincus & Winters 2002a); nonetheless an internal study in 1996 rated over one third of the Bank's public sector reform and privatisation operations unsatisfactory (George & Sabelli 1994). The Bank had thus been struggling to change both itself and its public image in recent years, with some relative success, adopting each new development thematic that became consolidated in the discourse; placing emphasis upon basic needs, environmental sustainability, women and children, democratic participative governance, and so forth. Wolfensohn's accession was coloured by talk of further change.

One year after Wolfensohn took control he began his own Project, proposing the *Strategic Compact* (World Bank 1997a, 1997b, hereafter 'the Compact') as a plan for Bank renewal¹⁰⁷. The Compact constitutes the first in a series of *problematizations* (Callon 1986) studied here, engaged by the Bank in seeking to position itself more centrally within the development field. That is, consolidating allies in its agenda by translating other development actors' problems into the Bank's frame of reference and arguing that the best way for them to progress is by working with the Bank in pursuit of *its* plans (cf. Rose & Miller 1992: 183-5). The need for the Compact was framed within the context of changes to the international development scene

¹⁰⁶ The 'Effective Implementation: Key to Development Impact' report (commonly known as the Wapenhans Report after its lead author) on the Bank found that the vast majority of financial conditions placed upon its loans were not being complied with; a result of what the report termed the Bank's 'approval culture' – a tendency to push-money-out-of-the-door rather than follow up projects in their implementation and assessment (Bankwatch 2001: 6, George 1994: 224). In 1995 IDA, the Bank's soft-loan wing which provides longer-term loans to the poorest countries at a nominal rate of interest and with a grace period before repayments have to begin, was due for its tenth replenishment through contributions by donor countries. This was being held back by budgetary wrangles in the US Congress.

¹⁰⁷ This was approved and engaged by mid-1997, with the implementation period officially ending in 2000.

mentioned in the previous chapter that challenged the operations of the Bank and others; the *growing availability of multiple capital sources* for developing countries; the *broadening of the development agenda* to include social, environmental and governance concerns; the *proliferation of 'players'* in development (non-governmental and private organisations); and the *information revolution* and *post-industrial economic practices* raising standards of performance and making knowledge central to development (World Bank 1997a). Demand for Bank services was perceived to be stagnating and its effectiveness was felt to have declined. The Compact was thus presented as a Renewal to *refuel* current business activities, *refocus* the development agenda, *retool* the Bank's knowledge base, and *revamp* institutional priorities (World Bank 2002a, 1998b, 1997a, 1997b).

The Compact centred around two main themes of change embodying both internally and externally-oriented concerns, alongside a third of self-monitoring and analysis. The two main themes were firstly to institute a knowledge management/sharing culture within the organisation and so *consolidate* the Bank as a leading partner in development and governance efforts, and secondly to *catalyze* a discursive shift within the development community towards a greater awareness of the centrality of knowledge to development. Instituting a knowledge management culture within the Bank was incorporated within the objective of consolidating the Bank's position as a premier global knowledge management organisation and so a development leader providing 'just-in-time, just-enough knowledge on call' to staff and partners (World Bank 2001b, 1997a: 20, cf. 1997c). This in turn connected with other elements of standard contemporary economic and management discourse concerned to improve responsiveness and effectiveness; flattening internal hierarchies, decentralising and networking¹⁰⁸ in order to encourage selectivity and partnering; and pursuing areas of comparative advantage to lower costs, raise productivity, improve capacity, speed up service provision and tailor services to needs (World Bank 1997a, 2002a). The second outlined intention to *catalyze* a discursive shift in encouraging knowledge economy thinking from clients and partners would also thereby position the Bank as a

¹⁰⁸ Four themed trans-country and departmental networks were established in 1997 to facilitate communications and knowledge sharing; the Human Development (HD), Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development (ESSD), Finance, Private Sector, and Infrastructure (FPSI), and the Poverty Reduction and Economic Management (PREM) networks (World Bank 1998f). I will give more detail of these and explore their significance in the following chapter examining structural developments under the Knowledge Bank programme.

leader in the new development agenda (World Bank 2001b: 3, 27, 1997a). The third element of the Compact plan involved designing and implementing new tools for measuring the Bank's performance, perhaps as a pre-emptive response to the anticipated criticism that this would be yet *another* ineffective reorganisation, but also indicating the organisation's technicised mode of discursive operations. Tougher analysis of project proposals and tougher monitoring of project implementation using 'a scorecard of performance indicators ... a set of development indicators ... regular, objective surveys' (World Bank 1997a: 27) have been encouraged on the understanding that better measurements lead to better planning, which in turn leads to better policy-making and so to better development¹⁰⁹.

The *Comprehensive Development Framework* (Wolfensohn 1999n, hereafter 'the Development Framework'), unveiled in January 1999, was a second initiative undertaken partly in response to the feeling that progress in achieving the Compact's goals was solid but slow (World Bank 1998c, 1998d). It was therefore designed to build upon Compact themes such as recognising the broadening development agenda, and encouraging selectivity and partnership in the pursuit of comparative advantage. The Development Framework proposes a Bank-defined matrix of actor groups and focus areas to improve coordination of development efforts and facilitate monitoring and evaluation. Its 'balance sheet' conceptualisation featuring macroeconomic considerations on one side and social, environmental and other concerns on the other promotes the Bank's new agenda as being more inclusive and holistic; whilst the outlined list of 'players in the development field' (governments, multilateral and bilateral agencies, 'civil society in all its forms' including NGOs and others, and the private sector) provides a public statement of willingness to co-operate and work in partnership with all relevant concerned development actors (Wolfensohn 1999n: 4, 21-2). The Development Framework thereby also emphasises 'proactive knowledge management' by client countries who take 'ownership' of their development programmes¹¹⁰, building upon decentralisation and partnership narratives (outsourcing programme definition and implementation) and emphasising the importance of the new 'knowledge' development in which the Bank has been

¹⁰⁹ Later reports on the Compact frequently seek to demonstrate programme implementation success through reference to a series of quantified variables upon service provision quality and percentage increases in staff and projects classified successful (World Bank 1997c, 1998b, 2002a).

¹¹⁰ 'A key lesson of the past 50 years is that development cannot be done *to* a country; it must be done *by* the country' (World Bank 2001c: 32).

seeking to craft itself a central role (Wolfensohn 1999n: 9, 29). In this way the two main Compact themes of consolidating the Bank's position and catalysing a discursive shift can be heard ringing strongly through the literature of the Development Framework as it attempts to organise and prioritise changes in the widening development agenda and formalise a division of labour between development actors, stabilising and normalising development identities and activities.

Whatever criticisms may be levelled at the Development Framework for segregating the broadened development agenda away from the core macroeconomic analysis¹¹¹, it at the least presents the organisation's value-system in a more transparent format than had been achieved previously and so functions in opening up a space for critical intervention. The documentation states that its implementation will require 'changes in the culture and attitudes of all partners', including the Bank, but softens this imposing tone by asserting that the Development Framework is based upon a 'natural evolution' of opinion within the development community towards *consensus* upon core principles (World Bank 1999e, cf. 1998c, 1998d, 1999b, 2000a). In parallel with the criticism that the Bank has too often pursued economic growth at the expense of social considerations, it states that 'direct observations...well documented in evaluations from across the World Bank' (World Bank 1999e) emphasise that the social has to be treated as a central aspect of development. A lack of 'harmony' in the past between the Bank and others in the development community is noted, but a call is made for the 'name-calling' to stop as groups recognise their common goals (Wolfensohn 1997g). In this way the Development Framework is positioned as leading a movement of the development community¹¹².

¹¹¹ The matrix form has been argued to fracture and discourage the consideration of cumulative effects of cross-cutting issues such as gender, environment and rural development (Wilks 1999b). The fear is that it may undermine alternative perspectives by facilitating 'weak sustainability' trade-offs between the 'costs' and 'benefits' of development, with traditionally defined economic growth treated as a positive and its side-effects taken into account only through monetary 'guesstimates' discounted over time. It is argued that this will sideline alternative understandings of development and the various agendas and priorities they seek to address. This criticism could be levelled at many such attempts to categorise and analyse a terrain consisting of multiple concerns and interests; the contested issue with the Framework is less the specific programme of analysis than the dominant value system upon which the Bank's whole conception of development is based.

¹¹² Avoiding any expression of humility that might seem apposite to its critics the Bank continues being 'proud of our history and of the role we have played' in contributing 'significantly to the betterment of mankind and to the improvement in the lives of many in poverty' (Wolfensohn 1999n: 1, 3). The dismissal of criticism as name-calling indicates something of an unwillingness to openly engage (at the Presidential level at least) with those who have serious problems with the Bank's operations.

The *Strategic Framework* (World Bank 2001a, 2001c) was the third programme in this project of renewal, a 3-5 year programme begun in 2001. The Compact was the beginning of a process of change, but change can be slow. The *Compact Assessment* (World Bank 2001b: 8 my emphasis) stresses that ‘the *beginning* of a change in *some* aspects of Bank culture’ has been achieved, leaving much more to be done ‘to turn the Bank into the highly aligned, efficient and performance-based institution that the Compact envisioned’. The Strategic Framework is thus set as consolidating and pushing forward changes achieved through the Compact and Development Framework, as well as aligning the Bank with the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDG 2001a), the broadened UN-sanctioned development shopping list mentioned in the previous chapter. The Strategic Framework asserts that the *Goals* establish a new common ground for pursuing partnerships in development work, and that the Bank will play a ‘convening and facilitating role’ employing its knowledge producing and management capacities to overcome ‘statistical problems’ faced in ‘measuring progress’ towards the *Goals* (World Bank 2001a: 3-4). It has since been active in establishing the *Goals*’ websites (MDG 2001a) and new partnering ventures for knowledge production and management detailed in the next chapter.

Continuity within Renewal

The notion of encouraging ‘ownership’ was in one sense a notable break with many past activities, after years of providing loans with policy-based conditionalities decided primarily in Washington¹¹³ (although as we shall see throughout the rest of this work the cosmetics of changes are often applied quickly in adjusting the language and rhetoric of the Bank’s public face whilst the culture, momentum and operations of the organisation need time and encouragement – or stricture – from a variety of sources to align themselves with any such ‘break’). The Wolfensohn Project was also to some degree a re-branding and mainstreaming of practices ongoing within the Bank however; underlining, highlighting and headlining keywords and practices that were already written into the organisation’s scripted development role. Below the historical context of two key issues is briefly considered – of interaction with non-governmental

¹¹³ The Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) were the most critically noted variety of such, loans being made on condition of governments liberalising import and export duties, capital accounts and so forth, integrating them into international flows of trade and investment and speculative capital.

actor-networks, and the involvement of borrower country governments in the country's economic and development policy formulation ('ownership') – which emphasise continuities running within the Renewal, framing it as a strategic performative device that has worked to highlight ongoing changes and lend momentum to further efforts.

With regard firstly to interactions with non-governmental actors the Bank (2001e) has described itself as having formally begun to 'interact with civil society in the 1970s', establishing a formal 'global mechanism' for dialogue in the 1980s, and decentralising these practices in 1995, from which point on 'interactions have steadily increased and expanded'. In more formal terms, an Operational Policy Directive was agreed with the Board of Directors in 1981 which encouraged the Bank to increase its engagement with non-governmental organisations (World Bank 2000s, 1998h). In response the Bank formed an NGO-World Bank Committee with 16 major NGOs in 1982. Facing criticisms of lack of transparency and autonomy the involved NGOs then decided to liaise separately from the Bank and thus formed themselves into the NGO Working Group on the World Bank (NGOWG) in 1984 to discuss priorities, form research programmes and hold meetings in developing countries to develop links with those whose voices they were seen as representing, gradually increasing the NGOWG's membership to 26 participant NGOs by 2000 (Willets 2001). The Committee and the NGOWG continued to maintain dialogues and then as from the mid-1990s – as mentioned and in accordance with key elements within the discourse of Renewal – the Bank's interaction with non-governmental actors gradually underwent a process of decentralisation and terminological adaptation, strengthening regional liaison points and increasingly referring to its engagement with 'civil society' and 'civil society organisations' (CSOs) instead of just 'NGOs'¹¹⁴. The ambiguities and difficulties entailed in effecting this latter discursive shift in the Bank's language of participation and partnership will be considered in more detail in the following chapter.

¹¹⁴ In 1996 NGO 'liaison officers' were appointed in all regional departments (World Bank 1997d); in 1999 the Civil Society Thematic Team (a loose affiliation of staff who interact with civil society) was extended to include senior staff from all regions and departments (World Bank 1999k), whilst what was originally known as the *NGO Unit* of the Social Development Department became the *NGO and Civil Society Unit*; and in 2002 was again reshaped as the *Civil Society Team* with a new structure (the 'Civil Society Engagement Teams') intended to deal with the 'growing level of engagement' (consisting of around 120-130 staff, 'mostly social scientists', with 70-80 Country staff in their respective country bases, 40 Regional and Department staff based at the Bank's Washington headquarters, and a core of nine people constituting the global Civil Society Team, World Bank 2003u, cf. World Bank 2003t: 1).

The NGOWG also began in 1994 to engage a similar discursive turn around the notion of decentralising its operations through regional meetings and formal elections for regional representatives (NGOWG 2000a)¹¹⁵. In 1999, in the light of these changes, James Wolfensohn encouraged the NGOWG to rethink its role as well as that of the Committee (NGOWG 2000b). The result of this has seen the dissolution of the World Bank–NGO Committee and the NGOWG as it was, and the initiation of a series of negotiations to establish a new system formalising interactions between the World Bank and ‘civil society’ (the Joint Facilitation Committee and the World Bank–Civil Society Forum)¹¹⁶. The outcome of these changes to this most institutionalised point of contact between the Bank and its wider community of non-governmental actor-networks remains in process, and so will not be considered directly here; the more interesting point to be taken from what has been noted is the extent to which and the time over which the Bank has been interacting with non-governmental or civil society actor-networks, and how these interactions are frequently portrayed in a progressive light in Bank literature¹¹⁷.

Internal reviews by the Operations Evaluation Department (World Bank 1999j: xi) have criticised the manner in which the Bank has interpreted ‘involvement’ by NGOs and other civil society groups too broadly and optimistically, leading to over-inflated claims of NGO participation when *intended* participation rather than actual results had been reported; or else to claim participation following meetings over initial project proposals, the feedback from which has not always been fully accounted for in later reports (cf. World Bank 2000u: 8, 2003v: 8). The general tone in this and other literature however remains one of constructive criticism, emphasising a progressive increase and expansion of interaction such that it can be asserted that ‘we’re on the right track’ but that ‘we’ can and will do better (World Bank 2003w)¹¹⁸. With each

¹¹⁵ The NGOWG has described itself as ‘the only clear and independent voice for Southern NGOs’ with regards to influencing development policy at the global level (NGOWG 2000a). Although it underwent such processes of decentralisation, it was nonetheless criticised as an ‘institutionalized’ gathering of selected *larger* NGOs unrepresentative of smaller *grassroots* organisations (Bretton Woods Project 2003b, Atkinson 2000).

¹¹⁶ After a series of negotiations the Joint Facilitation Committee (JFC) has now been established with Bank and civil society members, which will in turn negotiate the establishment of the World Bank–Civil Society Forum (see for example NGOWG 2000b, World Bank 2003t, 2003v, 2003w).

¹¹⁷ As when the Bank described the first ‘high-level’ meeting of the JFC in October 2003 as ‘another important milestone in its relations with civil society’ (World Bank 2003w).

¹¹⁸ Reference is made for instance to the complex and ‘evolving’ relationship between the Bank and NGOs or civil society (World Bank 2003t: iv, cf. World Bank 1998h: 4, Clark 2002), and to progressive *generations* of civil society involvement in the Bank’s work (World Bank 2003t: 2).

successive paper the Bank has celebrated the greater involvement of NGOs in its funded projects – and increasingly also that of ‘civil society’ – both in terms of numbers of projects, and deeper levels and earlier stages of involvement (see World Bank 1998h: 4, cf. World Bank 2003t: ii, 1997d), such that by 2000 the Bank (2000s) could write of NGOs ‘and civil society’ being involved in over 70% of the projects it funded, compared with only around 21% in 1990¹¹⁹. The negotiations to replace the NGOWG were also celebrated as involving 14 civil society networks ‘as well as NGOs’, and marking an ‘important milestone in its relations with civil society’ (World Bank 2003w, cf. World Bank 2003v). The Renewal therefore did not *initiate* an involvement with this wide array of actors, but rather served to *highlight* what had been achieved and point the direction in which the Bank wished to push further – a renewal of efforts rather than of the Bank. This has also served to frame the discursive environment around a ‘changing’ Bank, positioning critical-constructive reformist dialogue as the perceived more ‘reasonable’ option as a counter-weight to the discourse of opposition that the organisation has encountered from all quarters.

The second point upon continuity within renewal occurs in thinking about the notion of ‘ownership’. In 1990 a *Learning Group on Participatory Development* was set up within the Bank to ‘identify challenges to the support of a participation agenda in the Bank’s operations’ (World Bank 2001s: 2); the Group reported on its findings through the Operations Policy Department in a 1994 document entitled *The World Bank and Participation* (World Bank 1994: 2). The text was concerned with participation both in the sense of bringing local NGOs onboard Bank projects and also in stressing that ‘the Bank needs to work with governments to enhance their ownership of development projects’. Then Bank President Lewis Preston remarked in the report’s *Foreword* that ‘the World Bank’s interest in participatory development is not new ... projects can be more efficient and sustainable when they involve those they are intended to help’. The 1994 report was described as an ‘action plan’ to mainstream effective participation practices already underway at the Bank and ‘enhance

¹¹⁹ Since 1983 the Bank has produced annual *Progress Reports* on its engagement with NGOs (World Bank 1998h, World Bank 1997d) as well as a whole series of guidelines for staff (e.g. World Bank 1995b), internal reviews (e.g. World Bank 1999j), and briefings papers for staff, non-governmental and civil society organisations, and any interested wider audience (see respectively World Bank 2000s, 2000t, 2000u). For a further list of publications in this area see ‘The World Bank and Civil Society Publications’ in the *Social Development: Participation and Civic Engagement* section of the Bank’s site (World Bank 2002s).

ownership of development projects' (World Bank 1994: 1-2, cf. World Bank 1995a)¹²⁰. By 1996 the *World Bank Participation Sourcebook* (World Bank 1996: xi-xii) emerged, describing itself as building on the work of the Learning Group. This text adopted a far less confident tone in emphasising that it was not a policy document and not intended to persuade Bank colleagues, but rather only to help those who were *already* convinced of the benefits of increased participation. However President Wolfensohn's foreword to the *Sourcebook* (1996: ix), commending staff 'pioneering participatory approaches' and encouraging others to learn from such practical experience, provided a signal of the intention to mainstream these practices within the organisation as a whole.

With regard to all aspects of the renewal, budgetary constraints always threatened to impinge upon the Wolfensohn Project however; the Compact itself involved calling for an increase in contributions from member governments of \$250m over three years¹²¹. Several assessment papers in 2001 noted increasing operational costs and stressed the organisation's incapacity to deliver under current budget constraints (World Bank 2001a, 2001b, 2001c)¹²². So indications of necessary budgetary increases to cover the rising costs of what has been achieved and to carry the agenda forward have been made regularly. Yet given the problems the Bank has faced even with securing regular replenishments to the International Development Agency mentioned earlier (see Gwin 1997: 209), calls for further Renewal funding would have been both unpopular and unimpressive without good substance. Each new programme has thus functioned as both a new platform to call for funding increases in stressing the need for further changes (cf. World Bank 2001b), and a *renewal* of the Wolfensohn Project of Renewal, jogging memories and drawing attention by re-addressing a series of core principles, and promising a new Bank fit for the new economy and the new development problems and solutions possible therein. Under three new banners the same themes recur, the same changes in the development field and problems arising are posited, the same goals are proposed and the same Bank strengths focussed

¹²⁰ Participation was defined by the group as 'a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives, decisions and resources which affect them' (World Bank 1994: 1).

¹²¹ The total cost of the Compact programme was calculated in 2001 to have reached \$761m (in 1997 \$s); the difference was to be paid for through reduced operational and staff costs at the Bank.

¹²² The increased focus upon participation, knowledge production and knowledge management, and aligning the Bank's work with the *Millennium Goals*, were all said to have increased costs at the Bank, and also to have generated significant increases in overtime (World Bank 2001a, 2001b, 2001c: i-ii).

upon for facilitating their achievement¹²³. Each new programme and initiative manifests an adaptation and extension of the Wolfensohn Project to consolidate the Bank's position as development's friendly face, working to put smiles on the faces of the children, and instituting a culture of renewal within the Bank that deflects criticism through these initiatives. Large swathes of previous Bank activities can be dismissed as Old Bank and unrepresentative of the organisation as it is or hopes to become, as with the shift to a post-Washington Consensus¹²⁴.

So, thus far in this chapter, we have seen that the World Bank Group is a complex entity which incorporates a number of organisational bodies, each pursuing the same overall mandate within a formally-defined autonomy. This organisational assemblage consequently harbours a variety of different points and spaces of agency, but manages to coordinate a public 'face' for a restricted number of activities through both its hierarchical governance structure and the relative dominance of one particular outlook amongst its staff, which lends to a distinct organisational culture shaping a 'Bank' way of doing things. The dominance of Northern member-states within its top-level governance consolidates this situation, but does not determine it. Indeed, nothing necessarily *determines* such a state of affairs, and the Bank has shown, at least at the level of relatively marginal intra-Bank discourses and then top-level public pronouncements, a willingness and ability to commence upon projects aspiring to significantly change the organisation. In the second half of this chapter we now move on to consider how the latest programme of change at the Bank has become manifest in its contributions to contemporary development discursive practice within an understanding of our entering a 'knowledge' economy. In later chapters we will look at how this discourse of change has fared, and at what possibilities exist for it to be engaged with and pushed further from both within and without the Bank.

¹²³ '...our world-wide reach, our strength as a financial institution, and country-specific knowledge; our comprehensive perspective, sectoral depth and, also, capacity to integrate across sectors; our global knowledge and research capacity...' (World Bank 2001a 4).

¹²⁴ Criticism of current activities also touch the Bank only lightly since during renewal everything is open to reconsideration – nothing need be static in this era of permanent revolution.

The World Development Report 1998/99 and the Emergence of the Knowledge Bank Agenda

‘My goal is to make the World Bank the first port of call when people need knowledge about development’ (Wolfensohn 1997a)

‘...some people are empowered to know and decide, others to implement the decisions, yet others not to speak, or not to be heard if they do’ (Hobart 1993: 16)

‘To speak for others is to first silence those in whose name we speak’ (Callon 1986: 216)

The Knowledge Bank programme is a central thread weaving the renewal trinity together. The production, organisation, storage and dissemination of knowledge have always been areas of concern for the Bank, and aspects of a knowledge agenda have long lain within it¹²⁵. But 1996 marks the official unveiling point of the agenda when the organisation describes itself as having embarked ‘on a new vision ... to become a Knowledge Bank that spurs the knowledge revolution in developing countries’ (World Bank 1999c, cf. Wolfensohn 1996b). This concern with the centrality of knowledge to the Bank’s work stems from the two concerns stressed in the Compact of consolidating the Bank’s position as a development leader and seeking to catalyze a discursive shift.

Firstly in this regard, there was the sense that the Bank’s ability to produce, manage and distribute knowledge and information was a primary area of comparative advantage (World Bank 1997a), coupled with the concern that its knowledge generating ability was eroding¹²⁶, producing fragmented and uneven research bases and gaps in the Bank’s knowledge (Ritzen 2000, Goldman 1999, cf. World Bank 2001b, Fine 1999a). Given the increasing competition the Bank notes within the development field, the urgency to revamp its strengths would have been acutely felt in

¹²⁵ Knowledge’s importance has been one aspect of an organisational self-image at least since the days of Robert McNamara’s tenure, and in the 1987 Bank Reorganisation then President Barber Conable referred to a ‘knowledge-based’ institution which should provide ‘intellectual leadership’ (George & Sabelli 1994: 188-191). A Bank paper copyrighted in 1995 (Gaudette & Talero 1996) positioning the Bank as a knowledge broker show that the idea had been under development for some time. Stephen Denning (2001), World Bank Knowledge Management Program Director from 1996-2000, describes himself as pushing ideas about the Bank’s KM role amongst colleagues through the early 1990s in another post.

¹²⁶ Said to be evidenced by a decline in staff years devoted to research, and a shift from emphasising knowledge creation to emphasising its dissemination.

any discussions of renewal. Networker and Manager aspects of the knowledge economy/society discourse considered in Chapter Two can be observed here in thinking about how the Bank can coordinate others' activities, bringing together communities of actors and facilitating knowledge sharing whilst ensuring strong communication flows also *within* the organisation. Consolidating the practice of the World Bank as a Knowledge Management and Networking Bank (KMNB) could both improve internal operations and make it a stronger player on the development terrain. I will explore this idea in more detail in the following chapter.

Secondly, increasing knowledge concerns in the various discursive environments in which Bank actors were involved would also have been felt. The Bank has been portrayed by sympathetic critics as being quite effectively swayed by the tides of change flowing around it, playing an important role in communicating ideas and stimulating debate but not being an agenda-setter (Stern & Ferreira 1993)¹²⁷. As knowledge economy discourse became an increasing concern in economic discourse and the discursive practice of certain governments, and the idea was adapted and adopted into different disciplines, Bank staff would have been able to push for the organisation to explore what it could contribute as a Knowledge for Development Bank (K4DB) in further catalyzing the discursive shift in both developmental and governmental discursive practices. Here the Post-Industrial and Futurist tendencies within knowledge economy/society discourse are observable, exploring knowledge's importance as a factor of production, speaking of decentralising and flattening the organisation, and making projections of developing countries leapfrogging whole stages of development and entering a mobile hi-tech ICT-driven economic age without the baggage of an industrial era.

The *World Development Report* (WDR) is the Bank's main annual publication, with a very wide and dispersed audience, comparing very well in terms of both publication figures and overall budget against the annual reports of the UNDP and UNCTAD (Wade 2001a: 130)¹²⁸. The role and purpose of the WDRs is however somewhat

¹²⁷ At the time of writing Nicholas Stern held a senior position within the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development but has now replaced Joe Stiglitz as Vice President and Chief Economist of the World Bank. The mentioned paper was commissioned for and published in the Bank's own analysis of its first fifty years (Kapur *et al.* 1997).

¹²⁸ Wade cites the Bank's Report as running to at least 50,000 copies in English (and up to 100,000 in some cases), with another total of 50,000 copies in seven other languages, whilst the UNDP's *Human Development Report* runs to a similar 100,000 in 12 languages and UNCTAD's *Trade and*

ambiguous. Both James Wolfensohn and Joseph Stiglitz have stated that the Reports are not intended to act as a presentation of a Bank programme (see Bretton Woods Project 2000a)¹²⁹, and they are always fronted by a disclaimer stating something to the effect that 'the judgments made herein do not necessarily reflect the views of its Board of Executive Directors or the countries they represent' (World Bank 1998a: ii), on which grounds they cannot be considered to constitute formal policy statements (cf. Mawdsley & Rigg 2002: 9). However the 1998/99 Report under consideration here (*Knowledge for Development*, World Bank 1998a, hereafter 'the Report') clearly frames and prioritises elements of the programmatic, thematic and organisational changes undertaken through the Wolfensohn Project. The WDRs are only one point of crystallisation in a longer process of thinking and debate within and outside the Bank, with their themes being developed within presentations and new content to the Bank's web-presence. Over fifty other names are directly listed as contributors to the 1998/99 Report, as well as '[m]any others inside and outside the World Bank' who are indirectly credited for providing comments, papers and contributions (World Bank 1998a: iv). The WDRs furthermore now always undergo at least two sets of external consultations before publication, which is significant in terms of the Bank's concern to be seen as a listening bank engaging in partnerships for development. The 1998/99 Report is listed as being carried out under the 'general direction' of Joseph Stiglitz and Lyn Squire (now director of the Global Development Network, considered in the next chapter). Stiglitz's influence upon the Report is clearly visible through his speeches which fore-grounded the publication and served to embed the Knowledge Bank agenda within Bank and development community discourse, deploying terms, concepts and phrases used therein¹³⁰.

Development Report runs to under 25,000 copies in only five languages. He also cites budget figures of \$3.5-5 million for the Bank's Report budget as against roughly \$1.5 million for that of the UNDP and \$700,000 for the Report of UNCTAD (Wade 2001a: 130).

¹²⁹ In response to a letter querying its role, James Wolfensohn and Joseph Stiglitz (Bretton Woods Project 2000a) both stated that they saw the WDR as a crucial tool for engaging in dialogue with the development community, a contribution to ongoing analytical work on development issues, and a catalyst for debate. They each stressed that it was not intended to focus specifically on the Bank's present and future direction and current and proposed operations.

¹³⁰ Such as the notion of the financial system as the brain of the economy (Stiglitz 1997c, 1998a, 1998e, 1998h, 1998i, 1998l, 1998n), the idea of knowledge as a global public good (Stiglitz 1997a, 1997c, 1997e, 1998a, 1998k, 1998p, 1999a, 1999f, 1999j, 2000c), the knowledge 'gap' between more and less developed countries (Stiglitz 1997a, 1997b, 1998a, 1998h, 1998k, 1998o, 1998p, 1999b, 1999h), and the Knowledge Bank itself (Stiglitz 1997b, 1998h, 1998p, 1999b).

The WDRs can be understood to perform *externally* as public relations exercises, producing the 'face' of the Bank (cf. Mawdsley & Rigg 2002); they can also be seen to perform *internally* within a process of identity construction, producing a space wherein a 'voice' of the Bank can be articulated, and acting as a catalyst for debate to resolve differences of vision and focus within the organisation. In this way the Report is the most significant keynote publication outlining the Knowledge Bank programme. It can be seen as performing an agenda for the Bank's new scripted role, 'a starting point for future research' (World Bank 1998a: 14), problematising the development field in asserting the need for the Knowledge Bank. For instance the Bank bemoans the lack of standard measures and systematic evidence that result in uncertainty about how to promote knowledge for development (World Bank 1998a: 131-143), and elsewhere (World Bank 2001b) stresses that it should give credence only to properly measurable variables in its work. This problem is positioned as a concern of the global development community (World Bank 1998a, 1999c), highlighting the need to develop consistent and accepted measurement devices and so bringing attention to the Bank's own work in this area. In the manner of the governmental literature considered in Chapter Three, the new economy is casually asserted as fact¹³¹ (the global knowledge explosion, the primarily knowledge-based nature of today's advanced economies) and great opportunities and threats to development are held to exist for those who respectively do and do not take up the baton quickly enough and run with the new story of knowledge's centrality. These threats and opportunities are said to be 'opposite sides of the same coin', implying underdetermined and manipulable outcomes, but their immediacy raises the stakes. Developing countries are said to need to increase their knowledge capacity as quickly as possible or else fall behind and face 'unhappy consequences' (World Bank 1998a: iii).

The Bank puts knowledge 'on a par with money' (World Bank 1999f, cf. Denning 2003, Pommier 2001: 25) as a developmental factor through claims that capital flows are increasingly affected by the strength of country knowledge bases, and that 'it is

¹³¹ 'Back-of-the-envelope' (World Bank 1998a: 26) calculations predict huge economic gains from improved knowledge acquisition and guesstimates are placed upon the influence of knowledge production and distribution on growth. Even when more substantial studies are cited, causal links are asserted with reference to a statistical display rather than argued for. For instance, the Bank notes a statistical correlation between higher levels of education in mothers and lower rates of infant mortality and draws the conclusion that education must therefore help with maintaining children's health. Similarly the Bank cites anecdotal statistical correlations between poverty and education to argue that education must be responsible for raising living standards (World Bank 1998a: 17-18, 52, 120).

lack of knowledge that causes markets to collapse' (World Bank 1998a: 14). The Report hints at the more pessimistic possibilities considered in Chapter Three of these developments exacerbating inequalities in knowledge and so multiplying other socio-economic intra- and international inequalities¹³². At the same time, developments in communication technologies are 'shrinking distances and eroding borders and time' as well as fostering a 'global store of knowledge' to which everyone could *potentially* have access (World Bank 1998a: i). 'Potentially' is a keyword the Report uses to conditionalise many grand declarations of change which, it argues, will be achievable only if we look at development from a knowledge perspective. The result is that the Bank can speak authoritatively of policies developing countries *must* prioritise and opportunities they *have* to seize in order to pursue a knowledge agenda and compete effectively in the global economy¹³³.

Once the need for an agenda change has been established, in the Report and elsewhere five key actor groups (national governments and their bilateral aid departments, the private sector, international governmental organisations, academic and research institutions, and non-governmental organisations and civil society, World Bank 1999c) are outlined as well as their goals and the challenges they face in such a rapidly changing environment. In the light of these challenges it is then suggested that their goals will be achieved through the advancement of the knowledge economy, and that the difficulties faced in this regard can be overcome by working through a Bank-defined partnership¹³⁴. A division of labour is outlined which prioritises private-sector agency in any potentially profitable area (information communication technologies (ICTs) infrastructure development and distribution, and the main fields of knowledge production), with other actor groups playing mainly facilitatory or regulatory roles. Governments for instance should aid private sector knowledge production through providing an open trading regime and a supportive but minimal regulatory framework and social safety net (World Bank 1998a: 3). Civil

¹³² The state of African and East Asian knowledge-bases and investments are cited as potential causes for huge differences in economic growth (World Bank 1998a: 26-39, esp. 29).

¹³³ For example, '[the Report] then examines three critical steps that developing countries must take to narrow knowledge gaps', 'They will have to adjust their regulations accordingly. In some cases they will have to abandon certain outmoded regulations' (World Bank 1998a: 2, 12).

¹³⁴ For example a burgeoning knowledge economy will provide new opportunities for private sector trade and investments whilst governments see their economies strengthened by pursuing such areas of rapid growth, which it is in turn claimed will help actors looking to give the poor a chance in the modern economy.

society groups meanwhile should function as a social and political buffer zone, bridging the gaps between global agencies and local organisations¹³⁵. The challenge for all development organisations is laid out in stating that *lack* of knowledge leaves people unable to progress, whilst information failures produce market failures and so hamper economic growth and therefore development. The Bank's agenda can then be summarised as addressing this urgent challenge to minimise exclusion by sharing knowledge and the capacity to produce it, and establishing institutions to secure free and stable markets that can ensure growth through knowledge.

The vague, emotive and inclusive group of 'the poor' emerge again in the Report (World Bank 1998a: 78-80), partially reconstructed as those that information problems will affect worst¹³⁶. There is no newly measured group of the 'informational poor', however, but rather the same 'poor' who are enveloped within the new value-system and conceived as being poor in informational terms as well as industrial-financial capital. The Report indicates a change in tone by stressing that the poor must be listened to, often having information about their living space unavailable to external actors¹³⁷. The *Voices of the Poor* (World Bank 2000q) project for instance, a 'participatory research initiative' mentioned in the previous chapter which characterises this change well, involved conducting 'listening exercises' in 60 countries to gather together 'voices' and report perspectives on poverty and the wishes and desires of 'the poor'. This initiative can be read as a positive attempt to create space for others' stories that might promote reflexivity within the Bank's operations and conceptualisations of development (encouraging recognition of the need for localised agency and goal-definition).

It can also be seen, however, as merely an adaptation in the Bank's self-representation, as the poor still have the most ghostly, unreal voice in the literature, positing a common ground in the 'they' who 'we' all wish to help, from which the Bank

¹³⁵ A narrative of globalisation is articulated throughout the Report (World Bank 1998a: 22) to lower government expectations of being able to do more and *determine* their own economic development, countries having 'little leverage on global trends' and being unable to isolate themselves from these.

¹³⁶ Primarily because these people have least access to education, means of communication, institutional safeguards to ascertain information quality and recourse to legal support should they fall foul of informational abuse. The Bank elsewhere issues a call to 'not forget the villages and slums' without access to even basic utilities, never mind the modern technologies it sees as promising this new world (2000c).

¹³⁷ This is reminiscent of Wolfensohn's references to 'the poor' he met through 'walkabouts' undertaken upon acceding to the presidency (1995) as desiring more input into the formation of development projects and participation in civil society (as well as greater stability, security, and opportunity).

can launch its initiatives. The Report still conjures up a passive poor, speaking of *giving* the poor a voice and *providing* them with the information they need, and the editing and processing of voices from the gathered documentation means 'the poor' gain mass audience only through Bank processes of translation. This is a necessary aspect of any process of translation, but it is not necessary that the Bank should be the sole collator and translator of 'voices'. Such work could usefully be outsourced from and funded by the Bank and performed by local groups. Although the nature of poverty is nominally redefined, no significant redefinition of the ends or means of development occurs. 'The poor' remain as an incredibly broad classification that homogenises a diverse range of disenfranchised peoples, maintaining a form of disenfranchisement through representational inequality, with the 'poor' global majority reproduced as one voice (or an edited collection of randomly sampled voices) alongside that of the Bank. This in turn maintains a continuity within the development 'project', managing the discourse in terms of the actor positions occupied therein and the 'voice' different positions can express with regard to defining problems and suggesting and mobilising solutions. The management of the 'voices of the poor' is one means by which the Bank can be constituted as an 'obligatory passage point' (Callon 1986: 197-204) between those bracketed as 'the poor' and those eager to eradicate poverty.

Boxed Light: Forms of Knowledge

Different discourses can be discerned within the Bank's work concerning the nature and use of knowledge for development which indicate something of, firstly, the distinction noted in the last chapter between social and number-crunching approaches to development (Pieterse 1998: 358-360), and secondly, the question asked earlier in this chapter as to whether the Bank ought to be seen as a bank or as a development organisation. Tensions recur between indications of a new agenda concerned to respect alternate knowledge systems and promote self-reliance, broadening the organisation's economic imagination and recognising the worth of other understandings of development, and attempts to adapt the new agenda to older themes, subscribing to the view of a single expansive knowledge structure whose adoption is necessary in order to achieve development (thereby encouraging Southern consumption of Northern produced knowledge and technologies). The

Bank's ambivalence with regard to these two closely-related issues shows through in its definitions of knowledge forms and so in its understanding of knowledge's role in development, and its broader conceptualisations of knowledge and consequent policy position. In thinking about areas and forms of knowledge, the Report firstly (World Bank 1998a: 1-2) briefly acknowledges the existence of many forms before defining two broad classificatory categories as those it considers important to economic development, thereby restricting its mandate. A similar conflation of knowledge and information, as in the work of Fritz Machlup (1962: 21-2), is then performed in referring firstly to 'the difficulties posed by incomplete knowledge of attributes' as 'information problems', and then secondly to unequal knowledge about technology as 'knowledge gaps' (World Bank 1998a: 1)¹³⁸. The Report then continues in this vein, knowledge and information being used fairly equally and interchangeably, apart from for the functional matter of demarcating the Bank's areas of interest (speaking for instance of 'approaching development from a knowledge perspective' and negotiating the risks and opportunities of the 'information revolution' World Bank 1998a: 2). The two most substantial sections of the Report are devoted to the two knowledge forms, framing it within quite a technical-economic outlook.

The 'knowledge gap' metaphor emerges from the conceptualisation of a single, expansive, dominant knowledge structure constantly being expanded by countries that 'push the knowledge frontier outward' (World Bank 1998a: 2). With this reductive epistemological demarcation, ongoing economic differentials between countries can be explained by insufficient efforts being made to reduce the knowledge gap. The national knowledge base (the knowledge held and the national capacity to create knowledge) is expressed in the Report by a few concrete indicators such as levels of investment in Research and Development. As with the works considered in previous chapters, the production of technical knowledge worldwide is seen as growing due to increases in patents issued. The possibility that increases in patenting could result from changing corporate trends and business practices such as those noted in Chapter Two is not considered (the possibility that within networked research partnerships patents might be used more often, insofar as formalising ownership in

¹³⁸ The Report does not so much define *knowledge about technology* and *attributes* as imply them through examples. For instance knowledge about technology is given as the examples of knowledge about 'nutrition, birth control, software engineering, and accountancy', whilst that about attributes is characterised as knowledge about the quality of products, diligence of workers, and the creditworthiness of firms (World Bank 1998a: 1).

this manner more clearly defines partners' rights concerning the knowledge produced). The Report also notes that not all technical knowledge is patented, but little is said of other knowledge forms, except when discussing the potential impact of intellectual property rights (IPR) regimes upon indigenous or traditional knowledges, which still ultimately fall under the broader technical knowledge banner of know-how (cf. World Bank 2000d).

The Report's approach to knowledge also employs two seemingly contradictory metaphors from which stem a series of negotiations over the role of knowledge in the economy. Bank literature refers firstly to knowledge being 'like light' (World Bank 1998a: 1, 1999c) in that it is weightless, intangible, and travels easily, enlightening people's lives and economic activities. Here the *non-rivalrous* and *non-excludable* aspects of knowledge are stressed as fundamental attributes¹³⁹. These properties are argued to make knowledge a *public good*, meaning that its creators are unlikely to be fully compensated for the social benefits it produces¹⁴⁰. The Bank secondly refers to treating knowledge as a commodity, 'putting knowledge on a par with money' (World Bank 1999f) and emphasising that although 'knowledge is different from other economic goods' it *is* still primarily an economic good (World Bank 2000b: 1). Knowledge is here promoted as 'the new currency in the fight against poverty' (Laporte 2002a). It has been argued that internal Bank disagreements could account for the inconsistency or tension running between these metaphors (Mehta 1999b). Alternatively the metaphors could be seen as working in conjunction. The knowledge as light analogy can be argued to *consolidate* the grounds for fabricating knowledge's commodification and possession rather than contradicting them¹⁴¹.

¹³⁹ The fact that one person's use of some knowledge does not prevent others from using it, and the difficulty in preventing others from *using* knowledge once it is known.

¹⁴⁰ Many questions arise with this approach to knowledge as a *global public good*; as Diane Stone (2001: 8, 2000) states, the terms could usefully be unpacked to ask who is the 'global public' and what is a 'global good'. A Public Good should be apolitical, meaning that this notion tends to treat knowledge as homogeneous, neutral, and technical, without asking about its socio-political and power functions.

¹⁴¹ To play with metaphors, the example of a candle is given of knowledge being like light (cf. Stiglitz 1997b); I can light your candle from mine without diminishing the light from my own, and so it is argued it works with sharing knowledge. However the lighting of candles is the provision of a service, and *possession* of a lit candle enables the service to be carried out. Further, the more lit candles that exist, the less any one candle-holder could ask for the service they provide as supply increases relative to demand. So a potential capitalistic interest emerges to formalise candle-ownership and restrict supply relative to demand to facilitate rent-seeking. If light could be boxed then under contemporary structures of ownership and capital accumulation, it most likely would be.

The public good status of knowledge anyway establishes a problem because the market cannot cope with such a good and so knowledge will tend to be undersupplied if left as it is. The emphasis of the Knowledge Bank narrative is consistent with the rest of the Bank's work in stressing the centrality of free trade and the private sector, but cautioning upon the need to ensure that such public goods are also provided in good measure¹⁴². A central element of the Knowledge Bank and Compact agendas is to promote knowledge sharing both within and without the organisation so as to improve its service provision, encourage innovation and promote knowledge transfers in all directions (North-South-North)¹⁴³. Regulatory action is therefore seen as a Bank concern, to negotiate a balance between creating incentives to produce knowledge (as a commodity) in and for the market, and ensuring any such knowledge is adequately distributed (like light) so as to raise people out of poverty. North-South knowledge transfer in the Report refers primarily to the leapfrogging potential of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) for development¹⁴⁴. The Report (World Bank 1998a: 39, 57) argues that *only* international trade and competition will promote sufficient investments in Research and Development, the private sector having 'the principal task of developing infrastructure and disseminating information and communication technologies' (World Bank 1999c). As such only an adequate international intellectual property rights (IPR) structure will ensure that the knowledge economy blossoms sufficiently to secure developmental potentialities. A strong IPR regime is seen as being necessary to demonstrate the safety of intellectual property and so encourage knowledge's production and international transfer.

Intellectual Property Rights: Knowledge or Development

The IPR question demonstrates well how 'the Bank' can inhabit more than one space on many issues, a mix of discourses expressing relative fatalism, satisfaction, and a critical search for alternatives existing within the extended networks of Bank activity.

¹⁴² Nonetheless the narrative would appear to approach libertarian extremes at points when the Report (World Bank 1998a: 68-9) speaks of competition negating the need for regulation without adding any conditions, free market competition having proved itself more successful than the state provision of services.

¹⁴³ Knowledge Management and Knowledge Sharing refer to the same phenomenon at the Bank, the 'managing of knowledge through systematic sharing' (World Bank 1999e).

¹⁴⁴ The Report acknowledges the problem that that FDI is directed towards potential profit, and so will gravitate to some areas more than others (World Bank 1998a: 29), but does not seriously pursue the implication that this could exacerbate intra- and inter-country inequalities and risk creating centre-periphery patterns of underdevelopment.

The ambiguous outcome for developing countries from strengthening the global IPR regime is briefly recognised in the Report when it firstly admits the potential for IPRs to hurt developing country interests by shifting bargaining power towards producers of recognised and formalised knowledge, as has been noted in previous chapters. A number of individual Bank staff research papers further stress the ambiguous relationship between levels of IPR protection and FDI, and thus the proposed 'benefits' to developing countries (see for example Bora 1999, Fink & Primo Braga 2000, Devlin, Guerrieri & Page 2000, Maskus 1997, Smarzynska 2000, Watal 1999). In the Report these concerns are then fenced off through a precautionary bias towards extending proprietorship, the Bank refusing to take a stance against a stronger global IPR regime because it perceives a lack of evidence in arguments both for and against (World Bank 1998a: 34-5). The Report speaks of traditional knowledge being 'improved' through the involvement of Northern corporations and recommends that countries allow companies to research on licence and then use the patents system to ensure they gain financially when goods are synthesised and sold to market (World Bank 1998a: 35-8)¹⁴⁵.

Other Bank literature and endeavours meanwhile emphasise the importance of promoting free information flows through open source software and lo-technology systems, developing country knowledge production and management capacities and avoiding charging for its knowledge services (or charging for them separately so as to encourage self-reliance upon the country's own knowledge, World Bank 1998e, cf. Ritzen 2000)¹⁴⁶. The Bank is a main funding and organisational partner in the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR), a network of research centres which has established seed-banks to preserve biodiversity and conducts further research with the aim of 'nourishing the future through scientific excellence' (CGIAR 2001). The CGIAR's Chairman is always a Vice President of the World Bank, and the secretariat and website of the group is based within the Bank. The Bank's *Indigenous Knowledge Notes* make reference to databases of indigenous knowledge it has created to pre-empt corporate patent claims (World Bank 2000d: 3-4). The *IK Notes* further consider problems with IPRs' for community knowledge,

¹⁴⁵ The Bank (1998a: 35-8) claims that such synthetisation and marketing of medicines derived from traditionally-used plants have led to 1990 estimated global sales worth \$43bn.

¹⁴⁶ 'Ultimately they must establish their own knowledge-bases, authenticate them from their own experience, interpret what is meaningful from their own perspectives, and create a future that meets their own needs' (World Bank 1998e).

given that the ideas in question develop in an open source manner and have no particular claimant. The Notes suggest using geographical location rights or traditional resource rights to construct 'a framework of principles upholding the rights of traditional communities'¹⁴⁷.

Little mention is made in the Report or elsewhere in the Bank's IPR literature to such pre-emptive protection, and neither is there any serious consideration of the viability of open source systems beyond minimal reference to 'public' software. The Report (World Bank 1998a: 8, 34-6) presumes that IPR frameworks are the only viable way forward, their strengthening being framed as a determined fact rather than a negotiable and workable set of possibilities¹⁴⁸. Similarly some Bank literature stresses that everyone should be empowered to contribute their own knowledge to development endeavours, highlighting the importance of not undermining local technologies and traditional medicines (World Bank 1999c, Ritzen 2000). Yet the Report also speaks of using education to overcome 'inhibiting traditional practices' such as traditional remedies, and to encourage people to be more open to 'modern methods' in modern medicine and agricultural techniques in the context of an optimistic reading of the Green Revolution¹⁴⁹ and genetic engineering (World Bank 1998a: 38, 41). It interprets developing countries' attempts to develop computer systems and disease treatments as *reinventing the wheel* (World Bank 1998a: 2), and advises them instead to acquire and adapt knowledge and appropriate technology from the North. The development-oriented focus upon education could, when deployed from within such an outlook, function as an extended advertisement for Northern knowledge products¹⁵⁰.

¹⁴⁷ As with the case of RiceTec and the Indian government in the dispute over RiceTec's attempts to claim ownership of the name 'Basmati rice' (see Chapter Three).

¹⁴⁸ 'Stronger IPRs are a permanent feature of the new global economy' (World Bank 1998a: 36).

¹⁴⁹ The Green Revolution is cited in the Report (World Bank: 1998a: 43, 8, 4) as a 'paradigm of knowledge for development' spreading new knowledge to feed the world. Yet this example works equally well in the counter-argument that the knowledge 'revolution' stands to further Northern capital interests at the expense of the poor (e.g. George 1991: 17).

¹⁵⁰ In a similar fashion to the government discourse analysed in Chapter Three education is promoted as facilitating knowledge absorption and the production of future knowledge producers, with well-governed market mechanisms being the key to resolving optimal outcomes (private educational institutions having lower unit costs and higher productivity outcomes). The discursive terminology normalises this presumption, referring to families as 'consumers' in 'the private market for education'. Again as with the discourse considered in Chapter Three, 'partnerships with industry' are seen as crucial to ensuring school and university curricula are relevant to the needs of industry (World Bank 1998a: 44, 48-9).

The *Bank as business* aspect of its operations also shows here, when South-North knowledge transfers are understood as referring to the Bank's role in translating local knowledges into 'global development assets' (World Bank 1999f). The Bank's Knowledge Management mission is encapsulated as '*adding to our wealth of cross-country know-how and expertise by systematically capturing new country-specific experiences and indigenous knowledge*' (World Bank 1999f, my emphasis, cf. Pommier 2001: 26). Elsewhere the Bank (2001a: 9, emphasis in original) insists that 'the increasing emphasis on knowledge, advice, and capacity building does not imply a decline in lending', meaning that this seemingly major conceptual shift – placing knowledge at the centre of development concerns – is not intended to effect any radical changes in the Bank's enterprise as a money-lending institution. Goldman (1999: 1-6, 16-27) has argued that the Bank's *business* is knowledge-production, which constitutes its main area of social control by 'manufacturing consent', whilst staff see knowledge (and not lending capital) as the Bank's greatest source of power¹⁵¹. Its presentation of knowledge is considered to be in many ways more akin to the promotion of a product, producing data that gets loans moving and so keep the organisational machinery rolling over. Knowledge-production on this view can be seen as a Public Relations exercise, cleaning up the 'facts' and presenting projects as 'win-win' situations. This all serves to illustrate something of the ambivalent position of the Bank, with quite contrary discourses inhabiting the space that formally demarcates it, but the alternative models living somewhat in the shade of the dominant Northern governmental-economic discourse.

The production promotion and public relations aspects of its work can be seen in the urgency with which it has begun to address the 'knowledge for development' issue since it came within the Bank's purview. Knowledge's primacy tends to be asserted in statements that 'knowledge is development', *the* critical factor of production and not merely another tool (World Bank 1998a: 19, World Bank 2002b). The move from the claims of Chapters Two and Three that knowledge is a key factor of production, to claiming that *knowledge is development*, is significant. Knowledge can be regarded as development only under a narrowly-defined economic conception of development equated with the amassing of capital, where increasing a country's knowledge base

¹⁵¹ He concludes, '[t]he Bank's power is in its control over data, experts, government officials, remote locations – a whole information network that no other organisation can pull together' (Goldman 1999: 27).

would increase its capital stocks and so constitute development. This would refuse the new gentle face of the Bank, concerned with holistic understandings of development (economic and social)¹⁵². Yet the Bank is trying to redefine its understanding of development, and so the assertion that 'knowledge is development' can more usefully be seen as being akin to the 'knowledge society' heuristic device considered in Chapter Two, a motivating banner under which the importance of knowledge for development is emphasised and a rallying call-to-action is led by the Bank¹⁵³.

Discursive Practice and Normalisation

The presumption that all groups want the advancement of the knowledge economy is in one sense safe in that it would be difficult to be against opportunities to 'leapfrog' whole stages of development, were this possible¹⁵⁴. It can be framed as an attempt to position the Bank as what Callon (1987: 197-204) terms an 'obligatory passage point' (as was also mentioned earlier with reference to the 'voices of the poor') as the problems others face are redefined on the Bank's terms of reference and its understanding of contemporary developmental issues and its proposed activities are framed as the best or *only* way forward for others to pursue. What is more tenuous is the presumption that all want the advancement of the Bank's understanding of the knowledge economy. This tends to be 'black-boxed' (Latour 1987: 41-44) in much of the literature, setting Bank-centred ideas of what needs to be done to support and advance this vision as the starting point for further negotiations. We might say that the Bank attempts to write the new script and then invite participants for the roles it has created, as with the identity-stabilisation exercise of the Development Framework. The literature considered can be seen as seeking to position the Bank at a higher

¹⁵² From this perspective the statement borders upon being a *non sequitur* insofar as it conflates and equates object and process; the amassing of knowledge cannot be equated with social development because knowledge needs to be *put to use* to be engaged in developmental practices.

¹⁵³ In the manner of the anecdotal examples that frame the dominant progressivist narrative running through the Report of people gaining access to world markets by using the Internet to sell their craft-goods direct; and of using information technology to help exterminate disease-spreading pests (World Bank 1998a: 60).

¹⁵⁴ The Report (World Bank 1998a: 57, 59) and other Bank literature's use of leapfrogging (e.g. World Bank 2002n, 2002p) often refers to countries bypassing the establishment of landline telephone systems and adopting wireless mobile ones instead, or installing fully digitised networks whilst most industrialised countries still retain analogue ones. The use of 'leapfrog' is fairly casual and futurist, promising great opportunities of advancement without cautioning of the potential problems with ensuring compatibility and social readiness to adopt the new technologies.

level of the development terrain as a premier knowledge management organisation, stressing its ability to provide well-situated policy advice to governments, civil society groups and other multilaterals; casting it in the role of an actor, writer and director of the development drama.

Several consequences could potentially stem from this. Firstly the adoption of a mode of new developmental discursive practice by an organisation with the intellectual, political and economic influence of the World Bank could amplify its presence within global development policy debates. Certain argumentative premises could become accepted in engaging with its discursive turn to argue over objectives and means of their achievement. A new space within which it is acceptable to perform alternative modes of analysis and make policy proposals could then be produced, normalising acceptance of certain posited changes. The knowledge focus might also displace concerns and depoliticise areas of development. If knowledge is conceived as development then issues that many see as central to the development problem¹⁵⁵ can be repositioned as minor issues to be resolved through addressing the key problem. Vagaries and contested elements within development discourse are reduced to matters of 'lack' of knowledge on the part of developing countries. Myriad questions upon the nature, heterogeneity and desirability of development are excluded from consideration; there simply *is* a hole and it *needs* to be filled.

Secondly, discursive normalisation of functionalist metaphors drawn by the Report (information as the 'lifeblood of every economy', finance as the 'economy's nervous system', and financial institution's¹⁵⁶ as the economy's 'brain', World Bank 1998a: 72, 81, cf. Stiglitz 1997c, 1998a, 1998e, 1998h, 1998i, 1998l, 1998n) further encourage an understanding of economies as biological organisms with their own natural life-course and which can ensure of themselves that capital is used in the most effective ways. These analogies normalise consideration of a minimal regulatory framework as a preferred means of economic governance on the supposition that finance is a very finely tuned system that should not be touched other than by those financial organisations attuned to its intricacies. No other analogy is made to infer that

¹⁵⁵ For example economic cycles of dependency and underdevelopment caused by or maintained through unfair trading practices, and representational imbalances allowing dominant groups to set the international economic agenda.

¹⁵⁶ The Bank here refers to what I term 'organisations' such as banks and financial investors and speculators.

governments and international governmental organisations could be conceived as the brain surgeons or neurologists of the economic body. By a technocratic displacement marking the economy 'out of bounds', a 'do not touch' sign is hung over the economy for governmental institutions.

Finally, the prioritisation of knowledge could generate misplaced efforts. Demand for hi-tech goods and services could arise where resources would be better employed elsewhere, as when the Report (World Bank 1998a: 68) speaks of 'leveraging poor peoples' willingness to pay' for telecommunication systems¹⁵⁷. Economic gains could also be sought where they are elusive. The Report unreservedly encourages all countries to engage with labour opportunities in the knowledge economy as though this were an ever-expanding pie. The danger is that countries will be set on the same economic programme at the risk of oversupplying knowledge goods and services and so reducing the potential benefits for each participating country as market prices fall. As more countries move into low value-added sectors of knowledge work as first steps in the new economy, there is the danger an international knowledge economy division of labour emerging, as discussed in Chapter Three (cf. Cammack 2002)¹⁵⁸.

Conclusion

One understanding and application of the Knowledge Bank programme, then, sings the same songs as the governmental voices heard loudest in Part One; development literature's dominant themes of underdevelopment as lack or inadequacy; the celebration of free trade as the policy solution to attract capital and pursue development; and the treatment of knowledge and information as being commodifiable through the development of an intellectual property rights framework, which would enable their incorporation within the dominant contemporary system of capital regulation. The Knowledge Bank programme in one way performs an organisational re-branding of the World Bank as a Knowledge for Development Bank,

¹⁵⁷ Development organisations could also concentrate on becoming efficient knowledge producers and managers at the expense of their roles in promoting social and economic development (cf. King 2000a, 2000b).

¹⁵⁸ Education is given a strong developmental focus in the Report (World Bank 1998a: 54) *not* on the basis that it can enrich, and enable people to take better control of, their lives; but rather because it is one step in expanding and 'building a healthy, skilled, and agile labor force' to enable countries to compete in world markets. The education to be promoted (mathematics, science and engineering) is chosen for its perceived contribution to economic growth on the basis of statistical correlations between enrolments and later growth in GDP.

promoting its knowledge products in the process. But as has been noted, the organisation is a large and complex assemblage of different actor-networks, and alongside this concern to treat knowledge as money there exist efforts to preserve forms of knowledge as public goods, as with the CGIAR, and to protect the open source nature of 'indigenous knowledges'.

To adapt an idea of Anthony Bebbington *et al.* (forthcoming), writing about the Bank's adoption and adaptation of 'social capital' into its discursive practice, it seems that the Knowledge Bank exists as several conversations within the Bank, each with its own grammar and priorities. Whilst some economic minds might view knowledge simply as capital and concern themselves with knowledge maximising (profit-maximising) policies, other social scientists (and broader-minded economists) may be more concerned with the significance of, and problems with, this socio-cultural shift, and the need to reconsider our institutions of capital regulation, and project-focussed groups may be more interested in the possibilities of using ICTs and networking to increase project success rates through knowledge-sharing. Because of the Bank's dominant cultural and structural influences, the economic perspective has assumed dominance as this discourse has entered the Bank, but its success could provide opportunities to widen the discursive terrain a little and open spaces for other voices and understandings. As has been noted, partnership discourse existed as a more or less marginal interest within the Bank for a number of years, from the organisation's first formal interactions with civil society in the 1970s. It was not until Wolfensohn's latest Project of renewal that this relatively minor discursive practice within the Bank was given the organisation's full attention, opening up a range of conversations within, without, and across the boundaries formally demarcating the Bank upon what this participation should and could be. Once the terms of reference are widely recognised, a range of voices talking about the need for the Bank to listen and participate in discussions are more easily heard¹⁵⁹. Elements of such multiple operative agendas can be seen within the Bank's engagement with networked modes of organisation as a Knowledge Management and Networking Bank, which we consider in the following chapter.

¹⁵⁹ As is shown by the development of pre-publication participatory processes around the *World Development Reports* and other instances of ongoing discussions with NGOs and others referred to in later chapters.

Performing the Knowledge Bank Agenda

Introduction

Through the Renewal discourse of decentralising and partnering, a second understanding emerges to that of the Knowledge for Development Bank discussed in the previous chapter, of a Knowledge Management and Networking Bank, practised as Bank-initiated project-networks are partnered or outsourced. This has effects on the constitution of the organisation as a development actor and a network of development initiatives, a space wherein different groups seek to coordinate the various assemblages of people, technologies and capital that flow through and around it. One node within the organisation (the World Bank Institute) has gradually begun to establish, somewhat *post-facto* and with limited success, the appearance of a programme of change from the kaleidoscopic *mêlée* of new initiatives. The Institute is considered in this chapter for its ability to retell the story of the Knowledge Bank and to set an agenda for future development.

This chapter argues that the 'Knowledge Bank' is not a specific programme in the sense indicated in the Renewal literature or the *World Development Report 1998/99*. A few new lines have been written into the Bank's development script (decentralisation, partnership, the Frameworks), changing the organisation's character-description on paper at least. But it is not currently well-practiced in how to perform such a new role, and the 'agenda' is developing rather as a mushrooming of relatively autonomous variations upon a theme. The changes (and lack of changes) observed are rarely themselves scripted – any such attempts at scripting would tend only to demonstrate the dispersed nature of the agency assembled in the name of the Bank. The pronouncements which make up the discursive body of the Renewal and the Knowledge Bank set the scene for a series of improvisations upon a theme, producing what we might refer to as a *scenario* of renewal in which top-level publications prompt Bank actors with reminders of the new theme. A common trend within many changes is to minimise the role of partners in defining project-network

operations, whilst advertising a more decentred, partnered approach. However the agenda also opens up more possibilities than are seen in the core literature.

The trend for 'fostering' initiatives out to partnerships implies that partnership has a role as an organisational survival strategy, a way of keeping on-side both its donors and the wider development community. This indicates an interesting vulnerability and posits an opportunity to use the Bank's discourse upon itself, encouraging its practise in opening it up to alternative discursive contributions and engaging it in different approaches to development. As well as the prompting role of top-level publications, the audience also have a role in expressing approval and disapproval and calling for changes, and performing alongside those within the Bank also already exploring alternative perspectives upon development. The Bank's deployment of network discourse is also considered in this regard, and questions upon how the Bank might be reconstituted through the dispersal of agency indicated within the outline above are laid out here for further consideration in Chapters Seven and Eight.

The Knowledge Bank as a Holistic Therapy

A statement of intent for developing the Knowledge Bank agenda emerges in the ninth chapter of the *World Development Report 1998/99* (World Bank 1998a) entitled 'What can International Institutions Do?'. Country-based developmental advice from the Report's first two sections is reiterated (building country knowledge production and management capacity, and helping countries develop infrastructure and institutions to obtain and use knowledge, World Bank 1998a: 130) before three roles of knowledge creation, exchange and management are outlined as potential contributions of the Bank (and others). *Creation* returns to the notion of knowledge as a global public good. Such knowledge as cannot be brought within a property rights structure being consequently undersupplied, the Report emphasises the need to intervene in markets both as a knowledge producer and to facilitate knowledge production by others (providing market incentives for private producers and fostering collective action). *Exchange* and *Management* refer to the Bank's (1998a: 140) concern to become 'a clearinghouse for knowledge about development', bringing together country experiences and development organisations' work for others to learn from. This clearinghouse role is cast in an *agentive service* light and not that of a

passive 'corporate memory bank of best practices' (World Bank 1998a: 140), stressing the importance of collecting, adapting, and disseminating information and knowledge, and advising users.

As a result the Bank's focus under the new agenda includes aspects of continuity and adaptation, maintaining its role in policy advice and increasing its monitoring and analysis of funded projects (World Bank 1998a: 135-145). Arguing that 'analytical work...improves project performance' (World Bank 1998a: 137), and that the benefits of research tend to carry over to other projects, studies are cited to illustrate the benefits of continued monitoring and assistance of projects in justifying existent, and arguing for more such, extensive follow-ups and longer-term involvement with supported development initiatives. In this way the need to devote more time and resources to monitoring and aiding projects-in-process is stressed. This supervisory role ties in with the second assertion driving the emphasis upon policy advice, that 'in poor policy environments, ideas are more important than money' (World Bank 1998g: 17)¹⁶⁰. Policy advice includes disseminating the results of Bank policy research so as to encourage the adoption of 'good' development practice (World Bank 1998a: 135-137)¹⁶¹. It also includes the concern to develop Bank 'products and product lines in the creation and dissemination of knowledge' (Ritzen 2000: 3). A move away from the position the Bank has been much criticised for, of 'pushing-money-out-the-door', could be latent within such changes in attitude were Bank expenditure and staff-time to be redirected to supporting fewer projects and giving these greater attention.

However when we look for details of how the 'new' Bank will be shaped the story becomes less clear. The Knowledge Bank agenda represents a holistic sense of change with no specific programme of action, incorporating changes (such as the emphasis upon participation and ownership) that the Bank was undergoing prior to its advertised turn towards a knowledge-focus. To continue the analogy of development

¹⁶⁰ This notion became a Bank renewal theme through rehearsal of the idea in a number of papers. For instance an abbreviated version was presented to the *Reinventing the World Bank* conference (see <http://www.worldbank.nwu.edu>) as well as appearing in later policy research bulletins (World Bank 2000g).

¹⁶¹ As when development agencies promoted free markets within public policy discourse throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Eliding its own agency in portraying a progression towards greater knowledge upon and improved understandings of development, this 'trend toward economic liberalization and greater openness' is presented as an entirely consensual process in the Report (World Bank 1998a: 135-137), countries being depicted as having responded of their own will to published research and advertised examples of good practice. No explicit mention is made of the conditionalities applied to Bank and IMF loans which played a considerable role in inducing such policy shifts during these years.

with a drama, we might describe these changes as being shifts in the scenery (a proliferation of initiatives emphasising their contributions to knowledge management and knowledge-producing capacities at the Bank, between the Bank and other development actors, or of developing countries) whilst the plot of the piece (the main characters and their styles of interaction) continues relatively unchanged. Within its top-level publication rhetoric the Bank is eager to tell a story of how it is changing its dominant mode of operations and becoming a decentralised, flattened organisation that outsources work and partners with external actors to ensure maximum efficiency and effectiveness. What is achieved is other than what is set out within the programmes of renewal considered in the previous chapter. The Knowledge Bank becomes both more than and less than, in essence simply *different* from, the programme of Renewal; at moments more holistic and at others a mêlée of multiple disjointed specifics.

The Knowledge Bank agenda is less than a programmatic change insofar as it is not so focussed and concrete. Threats stemming from the cost-cutting side of the Renewal – of unit and programme dissolution and staff relocations or dismissals – have highlighted the benefit of accentuating knowledge-related aspects of ongoing or proposed work. This organisational pressure to perform renewal and relevance to the Knowledge Bank project has promoted a rash of endeavours dressed in the fashion of the day through redescription as much as through any programmatic changes. The agenda might therefore deploy a new organisational *ethos* under which practices adapt and continue, as when the Bank emphasises ‘embedding knowledge sharing in all World Bank products and services’ (World Bank 2001g). Yet it might also produce a knowledge-wash as projects and policies are painted in renewal colours in order to gain kudos either within the Bank Group or else with external partners and donors¹⁶². Cynicism and ‘change fatigue’ within the organisation (Caufield 1997: 327, Wilks

¹⁶² For instance whilst IBRD and IDA, as the core World Bank, are more obviously affected by and bound to the commitments made within the Strategic Compact renewal programme, the World Bank Group body the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Authority (MIGA) chooses to refer to its ‘unparalleled knowledge’ of developing economies as one of its unique strengths enabling it to work as an ‘objective intermediary’; and stress how its ‘online investment information services’ facilitate capacity-building whilst headlining capacity building activities on its home-site (World Bank 2003c). Meanwhile the International Finance Corporation (IFC) lists knowledge-sharing – and knowledge-based activities such as advice provision and technical assistance – amongst its value-adding core activities for developing country initiatives promoting private investment (World Bank 2003g).

2001a) could furthermore dampen the impact of yet another top-down programme with its increased work-loads and new hoops to jump through.

At the same time, the notion of the Bank as a Knowledge Bank carries good currency both within and without the organisation, drawing upon familiar and fashionable discourses and being sufficiently vague as to appeal to a wide audience. The performance of knowledge economy and society discourses within all the social sciences would have meant that it was a relatively common currency within Bank conversations, with changes brought about under a familiar guise being more amenable than those in a foreign tongue. The discourse's edge of fashionable thinking meanwhile would strengthen the sense of the *new* in these processes of renewal. The knowledge focus is new but not too radically so, a fresh but familiar face. Furthermore, the non-specific nature of much Knowledge Bank discourse has allowed the notion to be adapted in a variety of ways. The understanding of the agenda varies from space to space, but the essence of the rhetorical turn embodied in its key-terms, slogans and issue-focus remain constant. The discourse's adaptability has produced openings for new initiatives as it has begun to permeate the Bank's organisational structure. The aura of the Knowledge Bank has thus been wrapped around the World Bank like a magic cloak of renewal as the organisation has begun to buzz with new (and newly-redefined) publications, programmes and project-networks. As one World Bank paper (2002c: viii) referred to it being 'a Sisyphean endeavour to attempt to construct a single detailed strategy' of even just the ICT aspects of the Bank's agenda, the same can be said of attempting to schematise the changes undertaken in the name of the Knowledge Bank. For this reason it becomes more than a programmatic agenda; a more subtle, rhetorical turn that colours everything, with potentially far greater longer-term outcomes than the agenda of which it is part. As mentioned in Chapter Five, the rhetorical focus is new but the organisational self-perception has been latent for years. The shift can in this sense also be seen as an attempt to redefine the Bank's *oeuvre*, to raise a generalised awareness of one understanding of the organisation and increase self-awareness of perceived strengths. To redefine the Bank's identity under a new banner by which many practices might continue, adapted to wear Knowledge Bank colours.

New organisational patternings have been layered on top of the older regional and operations-based groupings. The Bank (2002d: 2, 2002b, 2002f) now describes itself as being organised into regional departments, service departments, Thematic Groups, Communities of Practice, and Professional or Thematic Networks. The Professional Networks were created under the Strategic Compact as a new 'matrix management structure' drawing Bank-wide operations together under subject-oriented titles emphasising the new agenda (World Bank 1999g, 2002d: 3-4, 2002g). Communities of Practice (CoPs) are an idea adapted from private sector practices to fit within the Bank in parallel with its own Thematic Groups (TGs). Both are described as informal 'groups of people ... passionate about a common subject', brought together to share knowledge on common concerns and problems regarding the Bank's development work (World Bank 2002f). CoPs are said to differ in being more focussed on external agents' problems and needs, whilst TGs are established primarily to connect Bank staff (World Bank 2003k). A lack of clarity is displayed however when these Communities are alternately billed as adapted forms of, equivalent to, or subsuming the Thematic Groups, leading to varying estimates of the number of Communities and Groups in existence according to the definition used (World Bank 2002f, 2003p, 2003q). What are presented as the Bank's 'three pillars' of Knowledge Sharing (and were earlier referred to as the pillars of its Knowledge Strategy) perhaps more succinctly capture the general thinking within the Bank upon its Knowledge role. Effective as rhetorical calls-to-action, these are sufficiently indeterminate as to be susceptible to little of the concrete monitoring and analysis that a 'strategy' might demand:

'...making effective use of knowledge to support the quality of our operations; sharing knowledge with our clients and partners; helping clients enhance their capacity to generate, access and use knowledge from all sources' (World Bank 2003h, cf. World Bank 2001h).

So, as we shall see in greater detail through the rest of this chapter, the Knowledge Bank renewal has functioned as a holistic remedy lain over the Bank, bringing new colour to the skin of older endeavours and smoothing the Bank's complexion in promoting the impression of an organisation bound together in pursuing a common project, despite its dispersed constitution. The specifics of how the medicine will work are somewhat under-defined, and so these are consequently given less attention than

the promises of its remedying effects for the Bank, the development community, and the project of development as a whole.

New Forms: Knowledge-related Project-Networks

Four styles can be demarcated within the proliferation of new initiatives according to the greater and lesser involvement of external agents; more internally-coordinated, Bank-oriented operations intended for an internal and/or external audience (Bank Operated Project-networks, BOPs); those which began life outside the Bank, but into which it has bought a stake as a partner (Externally Operated Project-networks, EOPs); those that operate primarily from within the Bank but incorporate a formally established internal-external partnership (Multiple Operator Project-networks, MOPs); and those which began life in this form but have now been fostered out to stand alone as 'external' initiatives (Fostered Project-networks, FoPs). Two points of caution should be aired before moving on. Firstly, project-network forms will obviously overlap and co-exist more messily than such a quick outline indicates. The forms defined above do not indicate distinct organisational approaches but rather markers of degrees of outside networking, funding and partnership drawn up in order to consider whether certain styles of endeavour promise more or less opportunity for opening up critical reflexive spaces within the Bank and encouraging changes in its dominant developmental discursive practice. Secondly this outline is not intended to define a *new* mode of engagement by the Bank, but rather a shift in emphasis. The Bank was engaging multiple-operator project-networks and fostering initiatives before the pronouncement of any official intention to practice decentralisation and outsourcing¹⁶³. What is significant is the incorporation of these practices within a Bank 'programme' of Renewal, officially acknowledging and encouraging such an approach, building upon the mainstreaming of emphases on participation and ownership mentioned in the previous chapter. Bearing these two cautions in mind, we can now proceed to consider the potential of these four approaches engaged by the

¹⁶³ For instance the Global Environment Facility (GEF) was created within the Bank in 1990, its pilot phase being fully operational by 1992, and then by 1994 was converted into a partnered initiative between the Bank, UNDP and UNEP after petitioning by developing country governments at the 1992 UN Conference on Environment and Development (the 'Rio' Summit, see Young & Boehmer-Christiansen 1997 for further detail and an interesting analysis of Bank-GEF relations).

Bank with regard to the practice of its discourse of decentralisation and partnership, and thereby for producing changes in the organisation's dominant modes of practice.

More strictly Bank-Operated Project-networks (BOPs) include extensive exercises in information and knowledge provision gathered mostly under the Data and Statistics section of the Bank's website, an extensive series of statistical exercises that expands with each new trend in development thinking (2003i)¹⁶⁴. The list consists of longstanding projects and departments, illustrating how the knowledge focus is wrapped around pre-existing endeavours in re-scripting the Bank's *oeuvre*, as well as newer endeavours designed to facilitate knowledge sharing within the Bank¹⁶⁵. Some BOPs seek to link Bank staff with external partners, but tend to maintain operational activities entirely within the Bank and position external partners as rather non-directive, leaving the partnership as something quite nominal except for financial and technical assistance. For example *infoDev* (a partnership of private and governmental donors managed by the Bank that provides grants to promote the use of ICTs in governance and development) has an external Donors' Committee within its governance structure. However this meets only once a year, with a Bank Vice-President responsible for convening and chairing the Committee and appointing other staff within the governance structure, most posts being filled by Bank staff (World Bank 2002j)¹⁶⁶.

Many BOPs therefore continue quite standard Bank endeavours, such as making loans to encourage the adoption of new technological developments on the promise that this will facilitate participation in the 'new' economy. The advantages for Bank groups are that they can provide a response to the organisational pressure to perform the knowledge and partnership agenda whilst reducing their financial and technical

¹⁶⁴ Databases such as the World Development Indicators (WDI), Global Development Finance, Africa Live, and the Poverty Monitoring system are now Bank staples. Newer exercises such as the World Bank Institute's Knowledge Assessment Methodology (KAM) produce something more distinctly product-like than the WDI (World Bank 2001j).

¹⁶⁵ Various capacity-building initiatives such as the Statistical Capacity Building (SCB) and General Data Dissemination System (GDDS) teams also offer specialised and 'personalised' country services to this end, whilst policy advice groups such as the Rapid Response Unit (RRU) are designed to give swift specialist advice to improve the design and implementation of development policy.

¹⁶⁶ The Professional Networks also perform such a role, as do the Thematic Groups and Communities of Practice. The Investment Promotion Network (IPAnet) is another, a 'portal website' BOP designed to facilitate foreign direct investment in 'emerging markets'. It includes an array of external sponsors from the UN to North American, European, and Japanese ministries of finance and development. However it is still securely Bank-operated and features an online document database sourced primarily from the Bank with links to subsidiary MIGA websites (World Bank 2002k).

burden through external contributions where possible. Whatever claims to increased legitimacy can be derived from such nominal engagement of partners are another potential benefit. The restriction of external involvement to financial and technical assistance and nominal coordinative roles weakens the expectation of any significant new directions being undertaken however. The changes captured within the BOP bracket offer comparatively little potential for using the new agenda to rework the organisation. Frequently no space is given to alternative development priorities or conceptualisations of knowledge and exploring methodologies for their development. Statistical exercises are performed and data-banks are produced using established Bank practices. Online schemes such as the Africa Live Database (LDB) for instance, a 'program to help improve monitoring and evaluation capacity in African countries' (World Bank 2002r), provide a regionalised ongoing exposition of the Bank's information gathering activities, whilst the *B-Span* webcasting service archives Bank-organised presentations as a public 'bank of knowledge' (World Bank 2001k).

Externally Operated Project-networks (EOPs) are orchestrated from outside the organisation and so exhibit strong external partner activity, with greater or lesser Bank involvement. EOPs are interesting insofar as some use is made of Bank resources for endeavours defined by an external association in which the Bank is only one player. However the Bank's less coordinative role restricts both the range of endeavours it becomes associated with in this way and its level of involvement, with dominant aspects of the organisation's culture influencing partnership choices¹⁶⁷. Participation in projects where the mandate is defined through negotiation can potentially generate compatibility problems with more dominant organisational preconceptions of the Knowledge Bank agenda. As such, the Bank more often partners with other regional development banks, multilateral organisations, governments, and corporations tending to express relatively compatible operative assumptions, defined goals and preferred means of their achievement¹⁶⁸. These

¹⁶⁷ For instance PARIS21 (Partnership Advocacy Resource Information Strategies) can be considered as an EOP. This is a project-network aiming to consolidate the effective use of statistically-based evidence in policy formation and promote transparency and accountability in governance. Established in 1999 in response to a UN Economic and Social Council Resolution, it is operated through a secretariat housed within the OECD and includes the Bank's involvement alongside other major multilateral and intergovernmental bodies such as the IMF and the EC as partners (PARIS21 2001).

¹⁶⁸ With regard to focussing upon capital-oriented conceptions of development and the importance of free moving financial and industrial capital in achieving this (such as with the Trade and Development Centre, run between the World Bank Institute and the World Trade Organization).

types of organisation are far more likely to be seen as Bank EOP partners than other more differently thinking organisations. Overall, and as will be explored in greater detail later in this chapter and in the following, the Bank has tended to avoid involvement with already established EOPs in favour of pursuing its own endeavours that it later, when deemed appropriate or necessary, fosters as 'independent' initiatives, producing the feeling in the non-governmental development community that the Bank tends to squeeze out alternatives.

Multiple-Operator Project-networks (MOPs) and Fostered Project-networks (FoPs) are therefore quite closely intertwined. MOPs incorporate those project-networks that are still largely internally coordinated, but feature much more active involvement by and with external partners¹⁶⁹. FoPs are most often cultivated with heavy Bank involvement before it withdraws to play its lesser 'partner' role. The African Virtual University (2001, 1995) is one such initiative, a primarily ICT network-based organisation intended to improve access to affordable tertiary education across Africa that was put forward as an idea within the Bank in 1995, initially established and funded in 1997 through the World Bank's Africa region and *infoDev*, but by 2001 was being described as having made the transition from a Bank project to an 'independent non-profit organisation'. Similarly with the case of World Links for Development (WorLD), a five-year pilot MOP established in 1997 to help developing countries educate their youth in a manner appropriate to their participation in the 'new' economy; this produced an independent NGO (World Links) in 2000, to which it passed its mandate once a specified project-time had ended. Meanwhile a separate initiative (ICT for Education) was established within the Bank to mainstream the project's findings, so that in effect a MOP was split to develop into two separate initiatives, a BOP and a FoP (World Bank 2003j). These educational initiatives will be considered further in the next chapter. Fostering is not a necessary step, but many multiply-operated initiatives are later fostered or outsourced to stand as independents. The MOP-FoP shift can either be accomplished with obvious intent from the outset through the project-network's strategic development as part of the Bank's decentralising ethic, or else through the increasingly active involvement of partners and a certain amount of petitioning by externals (for instance civil society

¹⁶⁹ For example the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) which is housed within the Bank but involves 62 partner organisations and institutions including governments and corporations, and conducts research through 16 centres based around the world (CGIAR 2001).

actors and governments) producing tensions that are resolved in giving projects greater operational autonomy. Once externalised, such project-networks often include a large number of active non-Bank players and the Bank is *nominally* only one partner in the governance structure, although in a number of cases the Bank has been considered as continuing to dominate the project-network's governance, as we shall see with the Development Gateway especially in the next chapter.

As will be seen in the cases of three Global siblings (the Global Knowledge Partnership, Global Development Network, and Global Development Gateway – now registered as the Development Gateway) in this chapter and the next, the Bank's style of outsourcing can vary between a partial and agentive form of dispersal with managed control wherein it defines the goals, structure, operations and principles of governance of the bodies to be outsourced before doing so, to a more open-palmed approach of putting an incomplete organisational form out into the development community and being comparatively welcoming of proposals for its further development. Frequently a number of Bank employees are carried over to new positions within the outsourced units, encouraging the continuation of a Bank intellectual and operational culture. The perceived independence, and thus the development community's acceptance, of FoPs therefore rests on an assessment of funding and staffing sources, governance structure, and where an initiative is housed. Partnership functions as a form of organisational survival strategy in terms of both funding and community acceptance. The tendency to push initiatives out to stand on their own in the development world raises questions about the dispersal of the Bank's influence under different guises, but also posits an interesting vulnerability that is expressed in the attempts to gain the approval and acceptance of other development actors. It is important to take note of this vulnerability, as well as the show of strength such a proliferation of initiatives is often taken to indicate, because it signifies an opportunity for working with and through the Bank's discourse of renewal, decentralisation and partnering to influence the reconstitution of a *somewhat* new Bank.

Telling Stories: The World Bank Institute and Project-Networks

So whilst there is no single programme to the Knowledge Bank agenda, there are trends in the changes being undertaken. Furthermore, one Bank department has been elevated to play a leading role in producing and co-ordinating a substantial part of the agenda's practical substance. The World Bank Institute (hereafter 'the Institute'), 'the learning arm of the Bank', was created in 1999 (although a first preliminary meeting was held in 1998) by bringing together the two Bank departments responsible for internal and external training to create 'a center for global learning', 'promoting knowledge and learning for a better world' (World Bank 1999i, 2000h)¹⁷⁰. The Institute has been progressively nurtured to a position of greater centrality within the Knowledge Bank agenda and the Bank as a whole¹⁷¹. As the Institute's Knowledge and Learning Manager puts it, 'the Bank has entrusted the World Bank Institute with the responsibility to lead the shift toward a knowledge and learning Bank' (Laporte 2002b: 3). The 'Knowledge Bank Chronology: 1996-2002' (World Bank 2003h) lists the Institute as having been 'given a catalytic and aggregating role' in 2002 to ensure the integration of the Bank's knowledge agenda both within the organisation and in its work for clients. The Institute can be viewed as a MOP, with its core organisational unit wholly Bank-staffed and coordinated and a nominal External Advisory Council consisting of eighteen members meeting once or twice a year. Yet within, it hosts project-networks of varying levels of external sponsorship and coordination such that more than a quarter of the Institute's overall budget is provided through co-financing by around 100 donor partners (including the EC, IMF, UN, regional development banks, and a large number of US and European companies) whilst it works with over 150 training partner institutions in donor and borrower countries (World Bank 2000h, 2001i).

¹⁷⁰ The Institute's Mission Statement states that: 'The World Bank Institute creates learning opportunities for countries, Bank staff and clients, and people committed to poverty reduction and sustainable development' (World Bank 2000h). The departments were the Economic Development Institute for Bank staff, and the Learning and Leadership Center for policy-makers from developing countries.

¹⁷¹ From a single department brought into being under the stewardship of Joe Stiglitz, who was its Senior Vice-President at its establishment (World Bank 1999i) and left the Bank within a year of this, it has grown in stature to now act as the *Learning* link on the header-bar of Bank homepage alongside other defining Bank categories such as *Countries*, *Data* and *Research*.

The emergence of the Institute as a focus for knowledge activities within the organisation has begun to spin the web of the Knowledge Bank over the three *Knowledge Sharing* pillars of creating, sharing and applying knowledge, so that under the shade of a wealth of more and less grandiose pronouncements various forms of project-networks have mushroomed. The Institute engages with most elements of the Knowledge Bank agenda through projects for learning, producing and managing knowledge, and using technology and networking for development. It is involved in each of the four modes of engagement outlined above; a variety of BOPs such as B-Span and the Development Education Programme (DEP) exist here alongside MOPs such as the Trade and Development Centre, whilst the Institute also works in establishing and working alongside FoPs like the GKP and the Asian and Mediterranean Development Forums (World Bank 2000h: 4-6).

The Institute firstly plays a role as a Knowledge Management and Networking Bank initiative. The World Bank's *Knowledge Sharing* programme is based here, a distinctly Knowledge Bank endeavour in the first sense of turning the Bank into a premier knowledge management organisation, aiming to systematically capture and organise 'the wealth of experience gained from our staff, clients, and partners' (World Bank 2003p), make this available to the development community, and so consolidate the Bank's leading position in the field of development knowledge and experience. The Institute also secondly houses a *Knowledge for Development Program* (K4D, launched in 2000, World Bank 2001h), demonstrating its role in performing a Knowledge for Development Bank. K4D is intended 'to develop a framework for the knowledge-based economy and to provide concrete applications for its client countries', focussing upon 'building the knowledge dimension into' country development strategies (World Bank 2001h, 2002i). This involves assessing countries' knowledge needs, devising strategies to help them fill the gaps, and so enabling them to compete in the knowledge economy. Furthermore, returning to the notion of Communities of Practice mentioned earlier, different Institute Programs are given space to undertake their own Communities and as such the K4D Program has initiated the *Knowledge for Development (K4D) Community* by absorbing another externally-oriented Bank project-network into the Institute¹⁷². Through the K4D

¹⁷² TechNet was devised in 1994 and billed as a 'cross-cutting thematic group' to promote the use of science and technology for development. Since 1999 TechNet has been subsumed within the Institute

Community the Institute could potentially seek to bring other knowledge-focussed initiatives spread across the organisation under one banner, providing the Knowledge Bank story with a more clearly-defined face and sense of direction and over time changing the Bank's *ethos* and redefining its *oeuvre* in a manner characterising the Knowledge Bank agenda.

Yet neither the K4D Program nor the Institute as a whole could be said to embody a Knowledge Bank programme, as much as symbols of organisation and *reorganisation* (pillars, programmes, networks, groups and communities) overlap and intertwine throughout Institute literature. Plurality and dispersal define the Institute's efforts as much as they do those of the Bank as a whole; the K4D Program is one of twenty Learning Programs operated through the Institute, itself made up of four programmes which are themselves multiple entities (courses, services, tools, and the K4D Community, World Bank 2003n, 2001n). Although the Institute has increasingly assumed a more directorial role in producing and co-ordinating initiatives fitting the Knowledge for Development Bank and Knowledge Management and Networking Bank agendas, many regions of the Bank already independently perform such knowledge roles and others are affected by the pressure or the desire to do so. As much as the Institute might attempt to overlook the institution of a knowledge sharing culture within the Bank, the points at which this is adapted, adopted and put into practice will remain somewhat dispersed. Their association with different interest-groups (both within the Bank and external partners) will ensure that various project-networks maintain some, greater or lesser, degree of autonomy¹⁷³.

Opening Up the Bank

'To help us facilitate the sharing of global knowledge and lessons of experience with the Bank's clients in all regions, we have organized ourselves into Networks. Networks are an integral part of the institutional renewal effort aimed at improving the quality, relevance, and cost-effectiveness of the assistance we provide to our clients. They are an explicit way of linking Bank-wide communities of staff ... and equally

and reconfigured as the *K4D Community* (World Bank 2000p, 2001h). The lack of clarity mentioned earlier shows again here when *both* TechNet and the K4D Community are listed as existent Thematic Groups on the main Groups outline page (World Bank 2002f).

¹⁷³ Project-networks concerned with protecting indigenous knowledges or using local knowledges in environmentally-sensitive development endeavours, for example, might be considered as practising the Knowledge Bank whilst never coming under the remit of the Institute.

important, of linking Bank staff with our partners outside the Bank' (World Bank 2002g).

So conceptions of how the World Bank might most effectively contribute to the discursive practice of development are changing, but the Knowledge Bank cannot be classed as a specific *programme* of change. Appropriate policies have been advocated for international organisations in the new economy that correlate with the Bank's own theme of Renewal. A series of reorganisations have been undertaken to regroup actors within the Bank around activity-themes. Project-networks have mushroomed up sporting the language of renewal and knowledge (producing, sharing and managing). A new department has been created to catalyse activities around the idea of Knowledge for Development, and has over time been positioned more centrally within the Knowledge Bank agenda, but is unlikely to be able to assume a central coordinative role within the dispersal of activities. All of these developments return us to the idea of the Knowledge Bank as a non-specific endeavour. However a series of exercises have also been undertaken through the Renewal to reorganise the space defined by the Bank and produce new nodes to connect otherwise distant groups inside and outside of this space. The advertised aim of creating networks between professional groups inside and outside of the Bank indicates a willingness to engage its resources and skills upon a wider – somewhat *trans*-Bank Group – terrain of operations. As Bank-initiated and Bank-partnered project-networks become more numerous, more diverse and more dispersed within the development terrain through the Knowledge Bank Renewal, so the form and content of the organisation as a whole could be altered. One potential outcome of adopting the rhetoric and procedures of decentralisation and dispersal in this manner could be to effect a fracturing or partial dissolution of organisational boundaries, blurring a little the boundary-lines distinguishing the 'Bank' as a distinct actor from 'non-Bank' actor-groups.

Partial dissolution could have the effect of extending the Bank's influence as a facilitator, coordinator and convenor of development efforts. Dissolution would result in a proliferation of nominally-independent, Bank-associated bodies operating within a broadly-defined framework of consensus (sufficient to veto Bank involvement) upon the nature of the problems within the development project and the viable means of their solution. This could in turn normalise the conditions and standards under which contributions can be made to development discourse and development knowledge

around the Bank's own epistemological, methodological and socio-economic presumptions, thereby consolidating its position *within* and strengthening the dominant strategic (economistic) functions of the development apparatus. As increasing numbers of organisations produce and use knowledge or information formulated under conditions established by the Bank, its informational resources and calculative machinery are strengthened and the Bank is positioned to assert a more coordinative role, connecting development actors and facilitating knowledge's flow between nodes. The enabling and constraining implications following from this for the discursive practice of development will be explored in greater detail in the following chapter.

Another effect of the blurring of organisational boundaries demarcating the Bank as a distinct actor could be to loosen the governance currently exercised by its central Washington node, opening the organisation up to the greater involvement of more *trans*-Bank actor-networks contributing to, reframing, and asking *different* questions of development. As the number and variety of partnerships engaged by the Bank increases, so the Bank could come increasingly to be constituted as a series of looser assemblages of actor-networks traversing a space formally defined as the 'World Bank'. The World Bank too 'has to be composed, made up, constructed, established, maintained, and assembled' (Latour 2000: 113), and the manner in which this happens might be more open to negotiation through the changes being considered. Yet the Bank has always been to some degree a loose assemblage, with staff brought in on consultancies from universities or businesses¹⁷⁴, specialists working on contract for specific projects, a governance structure made up of Governors involved in their own country work for most of the year and meeting only once a year, and the Bank Group's constitution as an umbrella for five officially distinct and separate but in reality quite overlapping organisations. The manner in which staff within technical departments responsible for giving projects clearance (such as an environmental green-card) have to sell their services to regional departments producing such projects¹⁷⁵ indicate that internally the Bank has been organised as a space of

¹⁷⁴ In 1996 the Bank was already making public notice that it was 'stepping up its secondment of private sector staff into the Bank – and the assignment of its regular staff to enrichment programs in private companies' (World Bank 1996: 69).

¹⁷⁵ With all the bureaucratic politics this brings with it, such that more critical assessors might become less employable by project-developers who don't want to have to do redesigns, encouraging a consensual approach to environmental and other assessments of projects (Rich 2002: 33-4).

temporal and contingent connections for some time (cf. Rich 2002: 33-4). Again, as was mentioned in the previous chapter with regard to the Bank's relations with non-governmental agents and the notion of 'ownership', the significance of partnering and networking within the Bank's discourse is best understood as acknowledging ongoing trends, encouraging and mainstreaming and so *performing* them to an audience of donors, partners, critics and clients. The spread of partnered project-networks is an aspect and an outcome of this discursive practice.

As previously mentioned, the Knowledge Bank agenda might be seen as an attempt to strengthen the Bank's 'friendly' Stiglitz face over and against the Summers 'bank' face that characterises it for many critics. Stiglitz, as we have seen, came to the Bank concerned with broadening the development agenda beyond a strictly-defined economic mandate to look at the state's role in producing and regulating 'free' markets (promoting its value as an *agent* of development rather than merely a financial administrator or else a potential interference or impediment), transparency in governance, and how ownership of the development endeavour by those to-be-developed could make involvement stronger, efforts greater and so increase the chances of producing successful outcomes (e.g. Stiglitz 1997b, 1998a, 1998b, 1999c, 1999d). The Stiglitz face is prominent in the well-publicised manoeuvres advertising the Bank as a reformed, caring, citizen of the world community¹⁷⁶; a common concern of Wolfensohn, and Stiglitz in his time at the Bank, has been to promote the organisation as one which listens to those it works with¹⁷⁷. Yet the Stiglitz face is only one element within a Bank in which the Summers face is still perceived as being centre-stage in terms of officially approved and censored stories of development and economic growth, as seen in the four cases (including Stiglitz's) mentioned in the previous chapter. Furthermore, high-profile Bank research papers claiming to show that economic growth *per se*, 'globalisation' (read: of trade and finance), and capital account liberalisation are always either super-pro-poor, pro-poor, or at worst with no

¹⁷⁶ Much of the Renewal agenda bears his hallmark concerns with free flows of information and governmental transparency, and with recognising the importance of building up human and social capital in achieving development goals (social capital in a Robert Puttnam sense rather than that of Pierre Bourdieu – a device of economic analysis rather than one of social analysis and critique – see e.g. Grootaert and van Bastelaer 2002).

¹⁷⁷ Related effects have included the increased focus upon *social* development; education and training, knowledge management and policy-making skills, good governance practices, secure and stable legal infrastructures to encourage good economic regulation, and encouraging ICT adoption through the promise of countries *leapfrogging* stages of development.

significant positive or negative effects for the poor (Dollar & Kraay 2001), indicate how little has changed in the mainstream of the Bank economic thinking that will be peddled in its new lines of knowledge products (cf. Ritzen 2000).

The fact that a Summers face still exhibits a certain dominance does not mean that the Stiglitz face within the Bank carries no weight. Although, as also noted in the previous chapter, economists trained at US and UK universities predominate within the organisation, such an observation tells us little in itself. Clusters of other interests occupy spaces within the Bank, whilst economics itself is by no means a discipline of one voice and development discourse too is a heterogeneous affair within the World Bank. Bebbington et al's (forthcoming, cf. King & McGrath 2000a) observation of social capital discourse's existence within the Bank as several conversations in which the economic is dominant, was argued in the previous chapter to hold true for knowledge economic discourse also, and we might presume that the same could be said of many fields in which the Bank has a stake. The different discourses of knowledge in economic terms, considered in the previous chapter, testify to this. Whilst some parts of the Bank are concerned to extend and consolidate a global system of intellectual property rights legislation, other departments or sub-departments have invested time in trying to think about different ways of protecting traditional and indigenous knowledges and funding research centres to secure areas of *free* knowledge.

So the Bank is best characterised as a somewhat open space inhabited by different voices. To this extent there are productive potentialities to be explored in using the mentioned fracturing to affect further change within the organisation, developing *trans*-Bank networks that can provide support to critical internal voices pushing further the organisation's partial re-conceptualisations of both itself and the development field within which it operates. The Bank might be played at its own game, in seeking to diffuse the organisation more, so that the conversations within it can open up onto the public stage and receive both public review, and contributions from those still positioned as 'the audience' of the Bank's public face. This could be otherwise characterised as seeking to convert BOPs into MOPs by petitioning for the more active involvement of the Bank's partners; pulling MOPs out to stand as the more independent FoPs in much the same way, and demanding greater independence of such project-networks and their governance; and encouraging the Bank to use its

resources to open up development discourse to alternative voices, engaging minimally (except for financial and organisational support) in EOPs. Should the Bank more clearly perform with several voices, then, to paraphrase Foucault (1984a: 75), this might produce a first step in detaching the power of its truths from the forms of hegemony within which they currently operate.

Understanding Networks and Partnerships

So a network mentality is being instituted within the Bank as the metaphor becomes more deeply engrained within its public performance, a model of the organisation's political future in the style of 'a diagram on the basis of which reality might be refashioned and reimagined' (Barry 2001: 87). Section Three of the 1998 World Bank Annual Report (World Bank 1998f), 'Working through Networks', provides an example of the network metaphor being applied widely to an array of what could previously have been referred to as partnerships, gatherings or communities. Similarly the Report (World Bank 1998a) is dotted with various references to networks physical (roads, railways), socio-technological (telephones, computers), financial (credit assessment), knowledge-focussed (academic, research centres, laboratories, global knowledge, socially-embedded knowledge), and more purely social ('kinship'). The Institute meanwhile is described as 'promoting knowledge networks and communities of practice' such as the Asian and Mediterranean Development Forums, the Global Knowledge Partnership and World Links (World Bank 2000h: 3). A will to be perceived more as a 'network enterprise'¹⁷⁸, than as an overgrown bureaucracy concerned primarily with ensuring its own continued existence (which the Bank has on past occasion been accused of being, see George & Sabelli 1994, Wilks 2001a), might lie behind this flirtation with networks, outsourcing and decentralisation.

As was mentioned in the Introduction to this chapter, the discourse of Renewal as a whole, and more specifically here the tendency towards decentralising, outsourcing and partnering Bank operations, functions as something of an organisational survival strategy. The discursive turn gives new attention and emphasis to activities that have been ongoing at the Bank for some time, painting the organisation in their colours and

¹⁷⁸ Castells, 2000a: 187, a form of enterprise 'whose system of means is constituted by the intersection of segments of autonomous systems of goals'.

celebrating its embracement of the new and more gentle face they help it to present. The language of progression within such endeavours is again notable as through the institution of a networking, partnering mentality the Bank performs a new openness to criticism; as with reports on its establishing a study of its Structural Adjustment Policies with 'a global network ... of some 500 NGOs and civil society organizations – many vehemently critical of structural adjustment', such that 'voices are being heard that were previously silent' (World Bank 1998f: 74, 90). Two points of interest arise here concerning the terms used in defining the Bank's potential partners and the assemblages they form.

To consider firstly the 'non-governmental' grouping within the Bank's desired development partners. The Bank describes itself as having traditionally engaged with NGOs because of their prominent activities as research and pressure groups, but as now *extending* its reach, in the progressive evolutionary tone noted in Chapter Five (see e.g. World Bank 2003t: iv, 2, 1998h: 4). A discursive shift has therefore been attempted within the organisation throughout the period of the Renewal towards speaking of 'civil society' and 'civil society organisations' (CSOs), rather than just 'non-governmental organisations' (NGOs), as an indication of the Bank's broadening and deepening interest in engaging external participation and forming partnerships with non-Bank agents¹⁷⁹. NGOs are considered as one branch of civil society in the Bank's discourse, 'civil society' being used as an inclusive means of referring to all that does not fall under the rubric of government (and bilateral/multilateral governmental agencies) and the private sector (World Bank 2000t: 3, cf. World Bank 1999d, 2000a, 2000i, 2000r). 'CSO' is therefore understood as referring to all non-governmental and non-profit organisations, including 'trade unions, community-based organizations, social movements, faith-based institutions, charitable organizations, research centers, foundations, student organizations, professional associations and many others' (World Bank 2001e, cf. World Bank 1998h: 3, 2000t: 8, 2003t: 2, 2003u, Wolfensohn 1999: 26).

¹⁷⁹ This change is still an active process – as mentioned in Chapter Five the World Bank-NGO Committee and the NGO Working Group on the World Bank (NGOWG) have been dissolved whilst negotiations (which are still ongoing) take place over the establishment of a World Bank-Civil Society Forum. 'Civil society' and its 'groups' and 'organizations' have been present in the Bank's discourse for some time, but with more frequent references made to NGOs (see e.g. World Bank 1998c, 1998d, 1999j). It was only with the restructuring of the Bank's NGO and Civil Society Unit as a Civil Society Team that references to the acronym 'CSO' began to be made, and with equal or greater frequency than those to NGOs (e.g. World Bank 2000t, 2000u).

The danger in this *opening up* of partnership discourse is that the terminology becomes even more radically under-defined, which in turn opens wider the possibility that the Bank could engage fully in a discursive practice of participation but do little to open up to critical interjections and alternative perspectives. Important distinctions under the label of NGOs already remain under-defined and under-analysed within the Bank's, as well as wider, developmental discourse¹⁸⁰. The engagement of NGOs funded by contributions from corporations, Northern governments, and citizens of the global North can for instance already too easily – without careful negotiation and definition of terms – be hailed as a 'participatory' approach as legitimately as any exercises conducted with associations directly representing communities of those affected by Bank development projects¹⁸¹. Eliding the importance of analysing already problematic categories such as 'NGO', and introducing more inclusive and ambiguous, and *less* well-defined and understood, terminology such as CSO, could contribute to the formation of new hegemonic understandings within the wider discourse upon what constitutes a 'legitimate' actor or 'valid' contribution to the development terrain.

The terminological shift has lacked direction and clarity, however, with variations in the listing of groups included within 'civil society'¹⁸², and the emphasis upon agency therein¹⁸³. This confusion indicates that although, or perhaps because, the Bank advertises its concern with civil society as being functional and not theoretical (World

¹⁸⁰ Between International NGOs, 'Northern' and 'Southern' NGOs, Grassroots Organisations (GROs), Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and others (cf. Martens 2002, Reuben 2002, Hardt & Negri 2000: 312, Tvedt 1998, 2002, Edwards et al. 1999, Munck 2002).

¹⁸¹ For more critical thinking on the role, nature, and independence – or lack of it – of NGOs, and the need to carefully negotiate who represents 'whom' and how this is decided, see e.g. Batliwala 2002, Martens 2002, Nelson 2002a, 2002b, Edwards et al. 1999, Tvedt 1998, 1994, Edwards & Hulme 1996. For discussion of the influence of 'Northern' environmental INGOs over the voices of 'Southern' development NGOs in the US Congress' decision over its IDA-10 funding replenishment decision, see Chiriboga 1999, Nelson 1996.

¹⁸² For instance academic institutions and their membership have been listed within civil society (World Bank 2000r: 5, 2000i, 1998c: 51, 1998d: 1) as well as being listed separately *alongside* references to civil society, implying a separate status (World Bank 2000r: 6, 1999b, 1999d). The same confusion has at times been noted with NGOs, foundations, and 'labor unions' (World Bank 1998d: Annex 1, 2000r: 45).

¹⁸³ NGOs have been more often listed in specifically active roles in development projects, and civil society or CSOs mentioned in terms of the *need* to engage participation (e.g. World Bank 2000r). NGOs are furthermore given more frequent mention than many other CSO groupings. The ambiguous status of CSOs, as definitions have been developed and fine-tuned, has led to NGOs and CSOs being at times segued as 'NGOs/CSOs' (World Bank 2000r: 58).

Bank 2000u: 5, cf. Nelson 2002b: 4, Nelson 2002a)¹⁸⁴, the discursive shift and the terminology used therein has not been completely ‘black-boxed’ (Latour 1987: 41-44). Rather, spaces for debate have been temporarily opened up within and around the organisation upon the nature and constitution of its ‘partners’, and thereby its understanding of ‘partnerships’ and ‘participation’ (NGOWG 2000a, 2000b, World Bank 2003t, 2003v). The apparent edge of vulnerability in the Bank’s *needing* to engage participation discourse (in a way that garners the approval and acceptance of both the wider development community and its governing member-states) provides opportunities for reproducing and maintaining such spaces of negotiation upon the nature and positioning of the Bank, and how its critical interlocutors are defined, perceived, and related with. This returns us to the importance mentioned in the previous section of engaging with different voices within the Bank and seeking to encourage changes in how the organisation is perceived (as more dispersed and multiple), how it is constituted (as assemblages of more relatively autonomous units) and how it contributes *to* and consequently *shapes* development discourse (as a series of individual contributions detached a little from the hegemonic forms within which they currently operate). These concerns are the basis of the further explorations conducted in the final two chapters.

To refer now to the second point of interest noted above, the Bank frequently refers to any assemblage of Non-Governmental and Civil Society Organisations as a ‘network’ (e.g. World Bank 1996: 51-2, 1998d: 6-7, 1998f: 74, 2003v, 2003w). The network is a problematic way of conceiving an assemblage of five hundred variously sized, more and less independent organisations. The levels of connectivity between these groups prior to the Bank’s mobilisation is not spoken of, but we might presume that the constitution of a ‘network’ of *all* the mentioned groups could only be said to have come into existence through the Bank’s agency. This points to an issue developed in the following chapter of the Bank’s tendency to produce networks which – contrary to Castells’ (1999: 5) assertion noted in Chapter One – *have* a centre, that is occupied by the Bank. The presumption that this is unproblematic implies a romanticised understanding of ICT-style networks as spaces of unmediated and horizontalised flows wherein ideas can be transported or resources transferred without encountering

¹⁸⁴ ‘...what is important about the civil society debate is not that we agree who is “in” and who is “out” in some abstract sense, but that we agree on a working definition – and classification – that helps us make appropriate decisions about whom to involve in different tasks.’ (World Bank 2000u: 5).

any processes of translation or changes in understanding of their potential significance, use, meaning, and so forth (in the manner of what Bruno Latour, 1999: 15, calls 'double-click information').

Such a notion of smooth and instant network flows can tend to obviate the texturing and patterning of relations and flows of power; the lack of participation by certain groups, the clustering of activity from others, and the alliances that form within and influence the constitution of the 'network' (cf. Barry 2001: 15). The network instead needs to be approached as existing on a three-dimensional terrain, wherein flows interact with hierarchies and experience frictions and blockages; and considered with regard to how various nodes can play a greater role in bringing and holding a network together (and so act as more and less 'obligatory passage points' for engaging network connections and activities, see Callon 1986: 197-204). Adopting such an approach could illuminate something of the more and less limited potential of certain partnered project-networks established through or with the Bank's involvement. Three FoPs might be considered in this regard in observing the different outcomes of Bank-initiated project-networks gaining or lacking independence and so forming different kinds of network, the Global Knowledge Partnership (GKP), the Global Development Network (GDN), and the Development Gateway. The first two are considered here whilst the Gateway is treated as a more extended case study in the following chapter.

Firstly the fairly unproblematic case of the Global Knowledge Partnership (1999a), which describes itself as an 'evolving, informal partnership' of public and private sector organisations sharing knowledge to promote a broadened vision (sustainable, equitable) of development. The Partnership was established in 1997 and its Secretariat spent its first few years housed within and staffed by the World Bank Institute. Yet the organisation's evolution towards independence has been fairly substantial. From its earliest days it has included a healthy array of partners such as seven United Nations departments, the World Health Organization, the International Labor Organization and NGOs critical of other World Bank work such as the Third World Network (Global Knowledge Partnership 1999b). In 2001 the Partnership's Secretariat was moved to Malaysia, and will now rotate between partners roughly every five years. It is accountable to an Executive Committee, on which as of 2002

only one sitting member was an employee of the Bank¹⁸⁵. The housing of the Partnership's Secretariat in a Southern country is quite novel and promising. Critical commentary appears quickly online and spreads rapidly, and the fact that so little is said of the GKP on the many sites criticising the Bank can be taken as a sign that it is more accepted as a knowledge sharing platform not dominated by any one particular agenda than a number of other initiatives¹⁸⁶. The GKP would seem to have succeeded in achieving respected FoP status because the Bank drew back quite early on and through the first few major conferences (GKI and GKII) the group's structure and governance were negotiated between members, whilst endeavours undertaken through the Partnership remain relatively dispersed, the Partnership umbrella facilitating sharing of initiative ideas rather than directing them according to a programme of action.

Secondly, the Global Development Network (GDN) is another association brought together by the Bank that has had a more troubled beginning. The Network was created to build social sciences research capacity in developing countries by directing, funding and coordinating research activities, 'generating, sharing and applying knowledge about development' (Global Development Network 2001). The Network was established within the Bank under the leadership of Joe Stiglitz in 1999, and initially housed within and funded primarily by the World Bank Institute. Again the Network was designed to bring on-board other funding and supporting partners, and had become a legally independent organisation and moved out of the Bank by July 2001 (World Bank 2001m). Whilst the Network now includes over 200 registered partner organisations and a series of ten regional development networks for which it is establishing regional 'windows', it still carries many markings of being a Bank-inspired initiative. Glancing over the online résumés of the eighteen listed Network governing members in early 2002, one third had had or continued to have direct work experience and ongoing contact with the Bank¹⁸⁷, and (included in that third) the Network's director (Lyn Squire) was a World Bank employee of 20 years who had

¹⁸⁵ The Partnership's Executive Director at this time was furthermore a female Malaysian national (Rinalia Abdul Rahim) trained in Public Policy rather than economics (Comerstone 2001).

¹⁸⁶ Even so, the Partnership bears traces of what might be regarded as its time in the Bank, such as the focus upon ICTs over other aspects of development knowledge and 'appropriate' technologies, and the dominance of English as the accepted Partnership language of communication (cf. de Silva 2000).

¹⁸⁷ As well as Lyn Squire, one more governing member remained directly employed by the Bank, one had previously been a research fellow there, and three more were ex-Bank employees (Global Development Network 2002b).

taken charge whilst the organisation was an intra-Bank project, and moved with it when it became independent. The regional networks grant schemes were, as of 2002, based on Bank funding and worked alongside the Bank in initiating knowledge-sharing programs, whilst Network members were provided access to Bank knowledge tools¹⁸⁸. So Bank personnel, money, technology, and knowledge practices retained key roles within the Network's functioning.

Concerns were raised in the Network's first year about an 'economics bias' within the group (King & McGrath 2000a). This was acknowledged in a statement (Global Development Network 2002a) of the governing body admitting that 'there remains a strong perception that the Network is an exclusive club for economists' but clarifying that the network was intended as a tool for all social sciences. The statement admitted a series of points of structural bias such as the constitution of the governing body (mostly economists), but stressed that the Network was open to all. At the same time, two non-economist members were brought onto the governing board to correct something of the felt bias. Diane Stone, one of the new members, has since written several papers on the Network. Stone (2001: 3, 25) admits that the Network is still seen by some as 'a child of the World Bank', but contends that it is evolving now that it exists as a legally independent entity. She acknowledges the dominance of Bank-style economic discourse within the organisation, but stresses that knowledge is 'contested within the network', describing it as a 'battle of ideas' being waged over its nature and operations. In another paper Stone (2000: 249) toys with the notion that other Network researchers might 'housetrain' the economists to tailor their dominance. Stone (2001: 3-6) secondly notes concerns that the Bank established the Network without any serious consultation of civil society groups and so without listening to concerns that a Bank-funded initiative would duplicate efforts, squeezing out already existent development studies networks that would be positioned as competitors for funding, partners and audience.

Stone's points highlight two important questions with regard to the potential of multiple-partner initiatives produced by the Bank. Firstly that of how independent the initiative is felt to be, and so what potential lies therein for renegotiating its structure,

¹⁸⁸ The World Bank Data Group 'offers GDN affiliated institutions access to the Statistical Information Management and Analysis (SIMA), a comprehensive socio-economic database' (Global Development Network 2002b).

governance and operations should it be felt that the endeavour *is* too much a 'child of the World Bank' and so is likely to carry forward a development agenda that may not fit entirely with the aspirations of its potential and actual partners, and others that it affects. Secondly the matter of placement, and whether the initiative is felt to be *squeezing out*, and so threatening the existence of, pre-established independent ventures (producing FoPs where it could engage with and support EOPs). These issues become very apparent in the third and most contentious case, that of the Development Gateway, considered in the next chapter. The perceived problems with the Gateway most clearly address an issue noted throughout this chapter, of how one potential outcome of dispersal could be to extend the Bank's influence over the development apparatus at the same time as it reduces its emphasis upon the roles for which it has been predominantly criticised in the past (such as enforcing economic liberalisation as a conditionality of loan approvals), and plays out a new role as an educator, facilitator and convenor.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen how the ethos of renewal has spread throughout the organisation as a holistic medicine for all the Bank's ills, and has been performed as a Knowledge Management and Networking Bank in producing new, more and less independent, project-networks. The language of decentralisation has begun to permeate the Bank but the shifts in practice have been more ambiguous. Whilst the Bank now focuses upon coordinating and networking development activities, it frequently seeks to remain a central node within the networks it fosters. Bringing others onboard is one issue, giving up the reins of power is quite another. Many project-network forms demonstrate a will towards decentralisation combined with an unwillingness to loosen the Bank's control. This dispersal with managed control carries forward much of an old Bank agenda in new *knowledge-network* clothes. Furthermore, the outsourcing of project-networks to stand as 'independents' practising development within a Bank-defined framework raises concerns about how this process could extend and consolidate the Bank's influence over the development terrain, as will be considered in the following chapter.

However the complexity of discourses practised within the Bank warn against reading the Renewal reforms in a closed and presumptively negative manner; the changes ongoing within the organisation are still relatively open and underdetermined, and cannot be simply dismissed. Vulnerability is expressed, for instance, in the Bank's eagerness for approval and acceptance and the related adoption of a discourse of partnerships. The use of under-defined categories of potential partners (NGO, CSO) leave this discursive turn relatively open to critical engagement; growth in the number, variety, and levels of involvement of other development players have produced a proliferation of trans-Bank activities that encourage thinking of the Bank as a more dispersed, diffused, and underdetermined organisation. Such dispersals of agency can facilitate connections between those inside and outside the organisation working to push these re-conceptualisations further and encourage the Bank to exist as a *space* of debate more than an authoritative *voice* of development.

The most positive aspect of the unfolding agenda considered here is the potential it harbours for producing *more* such opportunities for moments of relative autonomy within project-networks that need to be seized and used, before they become subsumed within the dominant narrative of capital-oriented practices within the organisation. Through continual critical interaction it would be hoped that the Bank could enable greater dispersal and autonomy of its project-networks (FoPs); that it could interact more often and more substantially with externally-originating activities (EOPs); and so that it could contribute to the growth of local *spaces* and *capabilities* for thinking and practising different *developments* by those the organisation is supposed to help. The following two chapters will consider further the potential of this organisational dispersal both to extend the power and reach of already-dominant (development, knowledge economy and governance) discursive practices; and also to disturb the dominance of these narratives by diffusing and blurring somewhat the boundaries delineating 'the Bank' and defusing a little the power of its truths by enabling the strengthening of connections around different approaches to and conceptions of development.

Knowledge for Development or Governing Development through Knowledge?

Introduction

The previous two chapters outlined how the Bank has been seeking to re-conceive itself and its operations around the effective use of knowledge for development, reorganising itself in a more decentralised networked manner that might encourage this through a structured dispersal of distant and partnered operations going beyond itself and including other voices, however nominally. Problems have been noted with the dominant conceptualisation of knowledge within the organisation as a single objective system of truths produced in accordance with standards ascribed to or even set by the Bank itself, and with the unwillingness to properly decentralise control of 'dispersed' activities to parties outside of the organisation or a restricted cohort of approved actors. The new agenda trumpeted through the Renewal exhibits potentialities that have not been fully realised, given that the dominant organisational approach towards networking tends to orient the Bank towards the *centre* of the partnerships and networks it helps to create.

This chapter explores this politics of networks further in considering how Knowledge Bank practices function in producing the 'development community' to whom the Bank appeals, through its engagement in education and training, and the deployment of project-networks and new technologies to facilitate engagement *in* and knowledge sharing *for* development. These practices produce normalising influences upon development discursive practice, with enabling and constraining outcomes. A process of responsabilisation is engaged through these changes, bringing developing countries and the populations thereof to govern themselves by World Bank numbers, and so facilitating its ability to govern (and develop) at a distance (cf. Rose & Miller 1992: 180-1). One particular fostered project-network, the Development Gateway, will be considered in more detail with respect to these potential outcomes. The chapter also reviews how criticism produced changes in the Gateway, indicating ways in which the

New Bank discourse is opening parts of the organisation up to interaction with its own critical community, a point that will be considered in further in the following chapter.

Shaping the World's Citizenry: The Bank for Learning

As with the production of project-networks with external involvement, educating and training actual and potential partners is something that the Bank has been engaged in for a long time at some level¹⁸⁹. From prospective applicants for project-funding, to present and future generations of policy-makers (and development workers, educators and corporate players), the Bank has been involved with educational infrastructures world-wide through loans, scholarships, internships, research grants, and funding and training for policy and research programmes. Again what is new is the *strength* with which education and training are now being pursued by the Bank in its knowledge work¹⁹⁰. The Bank (2001u) describes itself as being 'already the world's largest external financier of education', but being now 'more committed than ever' to helping countries develop their education systems and build 'dynamic knowledge structures' essential to the new economy. This shift in emphasis frames as major Bank priorities the governmental foci considered in Chapter Three; the development of countries' *capacities* to educate, train, and absorb, adapt and share knowledge from elsewhere; their *stock* of trained knowledge producers, managers and government actors who can engage with this knowledge; and the governments' own *capabilities* to produce technologically and numerically-literate, knowledgeable citizens¹⁹¹. To paraphrase Andrew Barry (2001: 91), these foci attend to the matter of transforming relatively non-participating countries (and the populace thereof) into participating citizens in the new economy.

¹⁸⁹ Various Bank literature (e.g. World Bank 2002n: ix, 100) states that the Bank has been supporting tertiary education since 1963 when it officially began to 'lend for the education sector'.

¹⁹⁰ For example: 'Between 1997 and 1999, the number of education projects financing distance education activities and education technology activities has increased respectively by 20 and 90 percent' (World Bank 2002p: 2).

¹⁹¹ 'To compete in today's knowledge-driven economy and shifting global markets, countries need a flexible workforce of skilled, dynamic workers able to create and apply knowledge' (World Bank 2001v); 'If sub-Saharan Africa wishes to participate in the knowledge-intensive, global economy, it must be able to produce large numbers of scientifically and technologically-literate, innovation receptive, highly adaptable, and problem-solving minded people with predisposition to lifelong learning.' (African Virtual University 1995: 2).

The programmes and projects that these concerns produce fall roughly under three areas of policy reform and infrastructure development, materials provision, and distance education. The means and objectives of the Bank's work in these areas are set as being beyond the concerns of just the Bank and framed instead in terms of furthering the international community's commitment to education as a step on the path towards development, as embodied in the Millennium Development Goals. In this sense every project-network that emerges from under the education umbrella within the Bank is constructed as a Multiple Operator endeavour, and more and less direct references to other partners populate the literature. Education is part of the gentle face of the 'new' Bank. The agenda that it encapsulates is still very Bank-determined in terms of economic outlook and policy practices subsequently advocated, but is presented as an enabling device for governments to negotiate their own programmes of change.

The importance, firstly, of reforming tertiary education and developing educational infrastructure is linked directly to the production of knowledge societies in a manner highlighting its centrality to the Knowledge Bank agenda, with research projects conducted upon how education needs to be changed to produce *Education for the Knowledge Economy* (World Bank 2001u, 2002n: 99). In keeping with the Renewal themes a Thematic Group has been established from within a Network to begin a series of initiatives represented under the *Global Education Reform* section of the Bank's site (World Bank 2001w)¹⁹². Furthermore, consistent with the Bank's dominant economic voice and in line with the governmental discourse considered in Chapter Three, key documents within the Education web-domain are framed in new institutional economic terms, neoliberal economic-governmental presumptions being tempered by recognition of the state's necessary minimal involvement in areas of market failure, but strongly favouring the market as the preferred economic tool wherever possible (e.g. World Bank 2000n, 2002p, Soubotina & Sheram 2000). Meanwhile new subgroups such as EdInvest (the Education Investment Information Facility, <http://www2.ifc.org/edinvest>) have been established to 'play a catalytic role ... in promoting private investment ventures in education' and producing 'a toolkit on public-private partnerships' (World Bank 2002p: 3).

¹⁹² The Education Reform and Management Thematic Group and the Human Development Education Network of the Bank.

The nature of reform is therefore predominantly directed towards opening up the 'state monopoly' of tertiary education that the Bank feels predominates too widely in many countries, developed and developing, and breaking up the 'culture of privilege' this is argued to foster in the process (World Bank 2002n: 69, 88). The Bank advocates lowering barriers to entry, to allow private institutions to flourish and generate a more diverse educational market, on the basis that this will reduce the economic burden on governments and produce 'healthy competition, innovation, and managerial efficiency'. These reforms are then treated in the Bank's new responsabilising, participatory, enabling style. Its role is cast as that of facilitating the policy dialogue that can bring about such reform, and supporting it through project lending for infrastructural development and other needs (World Bank 2002n). The *Reform* website explains how the Group intends to 'gather and share knowledge on worldwide experiences' of reform so as to provide training courses for Bank staff and country Education Ministers, tools for assessing country reform capacities, templates against which to map education systems in planning reforms, a 'tool library' of other reform devices, readings on the politics of reform, and indications of best practices and case studies (World Bank 2001w)¹⁹³.

Secondly regarding materials provision, the Development Education Program (DEP) of the World Bank Institute produces materials and tools for teachers on issues pertaining to a widened conception of development in digital and material form. DEP produces a child-friendly entry-point to the Bank's site and teacher notes to work alongside this, and a set of educationally-oriented webpages organised under DEPweb (World Bank 2001x, 2001y). The idea is to present a platform for knowledge sharing and promoting best practices, enabling a global conversation to bring forward education based upon limited resources. Similarly the *World Development Report*, referred to in Chapter Five as the Bank's main annual publication with a very wide and dispersed audience, is given away free (to Southern educational institutions especially) in tens of thousands just after publication, as well as being freely available for downloading.

¹⁹³ For example: 'By partnering with the private sector, the Task Force will ... play a catalytic role for the Bank in promoting private investment ventures in education in developing countries. The end result will be the production of a toolkit on public-private partnerships' (2002p: 3).

Free educational resources will be very attractive to schools on restricted budgets, usefully serving as tools to facilitate education upon development. Yet at the same time these free resources could also work to normalise development education around a Bank mode of understanding. This leads critics to worry that such texts could crowd out independent publications in places where they might be the few resources that poor educational institutions can be sure of obtaining every year (Bretton Woods Project 2000a). Whether any crowding of individual publication formats occurs is difficult to ascertain, but the wider and more subtle effect would be the constant and relatively prominent visibility of Bank thinking (a certain mode of understanding as well as an interpretation of contemporary development issues) throughout the education process. This in turn could improve its perceived authority with educators and the educated who may later become part of the country's knowledge- or policy-producing communities, normalising a more widely accepted understanding of development definitions, approaches, problems and solutions.

A good example of the ambivalent positioning of such resources is a school textbook on development written by Bank staff, *Beyond Economic Growth* (Soubotina & Sheram 2000), which is made freely available in PDF format under DEP. The idea of the book was that it could function as a template that could be adapted by local educators and published in their local languages. Adaptations would then be placed online in an English version, with the adapted sections highlighted so that readers could compare and learn. Alternatively schools could simply 'use this international template without adaptation as a source of relatively current statistical data and widely accepted concepts' (Soubotina & Sheram 2000: 2-3). The book is a reasonable introductory text, posing questions upon what development is and how we can measure it, incorporating concerns with equity, health, education and sustainability. It thus serves as a useful educational tool, whilst at the same time engaging a normalising role insofar as normative statements are asserted as the feelings of the development community as a whole, or the results of knowledge produced through extensive experience¹⁹⁴.

¹⁹⁴ For example: 'it is increasingly recognized that state intervention is justified only where markets fail', 'Empirical evidence suggests that globalization has significantly boosted **economic growth** in East Asian economies' (Soubotina & Sheram 2000: 63, 66, emphasis in original).

In the chapter on 'Public and Private Enterprises', for example, 'socialist' experiments with 'excessively equal income distribution' are written off as having been bad for economic efficiency¹⁹⁵ and 'market liberalization' is bold-typed as good economic policy with little caution except for two final paragraphs¹⁹⁶. Otherwise, the 'typically low efficiency' of state enterprises is noted to 'hinder economic growth', meaning that state intervention can be justified 'only where markets fail', and even then 'government provision of undersupplied goods and services is not necessarily the best option' (Soubotina & Sheram 2000: 63-5). The final chapter then uses a Comprehensive Development Framework-style banner to address a handful of contemporary Bank themes of activity such as social capital, corruption, and the importance of country governments owning their own development programmes and coordinating other development agents ('In Search of a Comprehensive Development Strategy', Soubotina & Sheram 2000: 90-93). Whilst the notion of producing a text to be adapted for country-specific experiences and languages prompts the impression of an Open Content approach as discussed towards the end of Chapter Three, the initially exclusive authorship by two Bank employees counters this impression and indicates that the communities of those brought together to produce adaptations, alongside the Bank's ownership of the project, will ensure that adaptations are variations upon the text's market-favourable theme.

Finally, with regard to the Bank's three areas of education-related programmes and projects, its efforts in facilitating and practising distance education achieve something of each of the previous two mentioned areas of activity, developing infrastructural capacities through the promotion of public-private partnerships, and providing educational materials from the Bank's own resources, as well as those of private educational institutions. Similarly they demonstrate an ability both to facilitate educational endeavours within poorer countries, and to normalise the Bank's priorities and approach to education and development as those of the wider community.

¹⁹⁵ 'Take, for example, the experience of socialist countries, where deliberately low inequality ... deprived people of the incentives needed for their active participation in economic activities ... the consequences of socialist equalization of incomes were poor discipline and low initiative among workers, poor quality and limited selection of goods and services, slow technical progress, and eventually, slower economic growth leading to more poverty' (Soubotina & Sheram 2000: 29).

¹⁹⁶ The penultimate notes in under a hundred words how market reforms in some countries in transition to a market system have led to 'neglect of the state's vital functions', whilst the final asks 'why are an effective state and viable private sector both important for development?' before going on to speak of globalisation in the following chapter.

Projects such as the African Virtual University (2001, AVU), for instance, a ‘university without walls’ aiming to bridge the digital divide and ‘propel Africa into the knowledge age’, combine a will to develop educational infrastructural capacities within developing countries with the provision of education materials at-a-distance¹⁹⁷. In hardware terms the AVU helps to establish learning centres equipped with satellite and computer technology to receive distance courses, and on-site ‘facilitators’ to liaise with tutors and give assistance to students. Beyond this the focus is upon distance services (an online library and ‘digital learning portal’ knowledge sharing device). In its early stages AVU was admitted to depend upon ‘established’, namely Northern, ‘producers of course and educational materials’, but the stated aim was that it should later begin to ‘engage in the production of top quality instructional materials in Africa by Africans’ (African Virtual University 1995: 4). Nonetheless AVU’s educational mandate still expresses bias in what is conceived as useful education, speaking of improving ‘science, engineering and business instruction’ (African Virtual University 1995: 3) with little or no reference to other disciplines of study.

So we see here how the dominant practices at the Bank with regard to education – a core concern of both knowledge economy and contemporary development discourse – reproduce aspects of the dominant governmental knowledge economy discursive practices discussed in Chapter Three. These practices could tend in turn to produce normalising effects within the discursive practice of both education and development; promoting particular *approaches to* and particular *forms* of education, as well as the use of particular *means* of funding; and encouraging the adoption of a *common* understanding of development and the shared concerns of both developers and those to-be-developed.

¹⁹⁷ A range of other initiatives covering all four outlined modes of Bank engagement are involved in distance education. WorLD was established to explore the use of ICTs in developing educational networks and resource-pools to connect teachers, schools, and education ministries worldwide. (World Bank 2003j, World Links 2002). The Global Development Learning Network (GDLN) is sold as being devoted to capacity building and learning, facilitating the creation of a network of policy-makers and development experts through use of contemporary ICTs (World Bank 2002m). Finally the Global Distance Education Network coordinates activities between other external distance education institutions, and the Bank (2001t: 32) further claims 16 distance learning centres of its own.

Instituting Technologies of Development and Governance

'greater emphasis has been placed on knowledge as a catalyst of reform ... courses help spread up-to-the-minute knowledge on key development challenges' (World Bank 1998f: 7)

'If the Bank is to be a knowledge leader, it needs to be on the lookout for new products and product lines in the creation and dissemination of knowledge.' (Ritzen 2000: 3)

Distance education opens onto a further range of activities, in the distance training of development players, producing a stronger sense of the phrase 'development community'. Further to its educational activities for future knowledge producers, the Bank has also focussed upon training the current producers, users and policy makers, as well as building their capacity to produce. In doing so it secondly influences the priorities that will shape this production, seeking to connect and so produce networks or communities of approved educational institutions as well as those whom it has trained, and thirdly works to establish and consolidate the presence of its tools or technologies of development.

In respect of training, Bank programmes and literature now focus on the supportive act of building countries' trade-related 'capacity' (TRCB programmes). This entails enabling more effective participation in international trade negotiations by developing the skills and understanding of policy-makers and enterprises in handling trade issues, and developing policy and governmental institutional capabilities for negotiating and implementing agreements (Powell 2002: 3). The Institute handles TRCB work through training programmes with indicative titles such as *Global Integration and the New Trade Agenda*, *Using Knowledge for Development*, and *Poverty Analysis for Policymaking* (World Bank 2003n). This assistance role performs the Knowledge Bank vision well, pushing education rather than dollars and displaying a care to develop countries' capacities to develop themselves.

Secondly, through the Renewal's focus upon decentralising and networking, the organisation the Bank has engaged in the production of communities or networks of actors sharing common sets of epistemological and discursive presumptions. In relation to educational initiatives, for instance, WorLD and World Links (a MOP and related FoP mentioned in the previous chapter) were established to explore the use of

ICTs in developing educational networks and resource-pools to connect teachers, schools, and education ministries worldwide (World Bank 2003j, World Links 2002), whilst the Global Development Learning Network (GDLN) is advertised as facilitating the creation of a network of policy-makers and development experts using ICTs (World Bank 2002m). Finally, the Global Distance Education Network (Glob DistEdNet, www1.worldbank.org/disted) aims to coordinate activities between other external distance education institutions, in producing a network or community of such. Networks are also produced to 'disseminate' stories of success, best practices and the benefits of reforms, as with the Global Education Reform (World Bank 2001w) space mentioned earlier.

Thirdly, the Bank produces a series of tools – of association in the form of project-networks such as the Development Gateway, and of data, information and knowledge production, management and dissemination, as seen in the Bank-Operated Project-Networks (BOPs) occupying the Data and Statistics section of its web-space (World Bank 2003i). A couple of more recent examples illustrate a will to improve the transparency and widen the understanding and use of certain Bank tools. Since the Report's publication, and in line with the Bank's self-positioning as the leading knowledge-producing partner with regard to the UN Millennium Goals, the World Bank Institute (WBI) has developed a Knowledge Assessment Methodology (KAM) as both an expository and interactive pedagogical device. KAM collates 66 quantitative and qualitative variables under six broad categories, to compare countries' performances in 'new' economy terms¹⁹⁸. Through such devices knowledge production, management and technological uptake become conducive to the cross-country analyses which the Bank sees as its area of comparative advantage (cf. World Bank 2001c), whilst opening up the possibility for client countries to use these tools in their own self-assessments. The Country Analytic Work (CAW, www.countryanalyticwork.net) website, established in October 2002, is another web-portal device through which the same themes of capacity-building and education run. Defined as a partner-maintained knowledge sharing website to improve inter-agency

¹⁹⁸ The categories are of economic performance, economic regime and incentives, governance and institutional regime, education and human resources, innovation systems, and ICT and information infrastructure. Because it is seen as unwieldy to deal with so many variables in presentations on knowledge economy strategies a simplified scorecard of fifteen is often used by WBI staff, including Internet connections, education enrolment, literacy and investment rates (see Dahlman 2001, 2002, World Bank 2001r).

coordination and cooperation on country analytic work, its aims are listed as being to *enable* clients to engage in policy reform negotiations, implement development and reform strategies, and to make effective use of loans, and to *inform* the general public upon how the agencies involved do their work¹⁹⁹.

The production and management of a framework of consensus is at stake in this discursive practice of empowerment (and widening of participation) through the provision of training and production of tools, as the Bank produces knowledge that serves to justify the approach of it and other economic and development organisations. The normalisation of the discursive practices of a global neoliberal policy framework of which the Bank is part (cf. George & Sabelli 1994, Wade 2001c) works in reproducing its hegemonic perspective across national and international governmental and developmental communities, shaping conceptions of *the good* with regard to governance and leadership, and economic and development policies.

The consolidation of communities of actors sharing a common space of discussion empowers the actors therein, and strengthens the perceived validity of the discourse they employ; techniques, devices and *standards* of knowledge production and management become *more* standard as discursive practices are increasingly normalised around the points of consensus resulting from their dispersal and acceptance. That is, in this case, Bank-defined knowledge production and knowledge management techniques and devices could become more widely utilised and accepted, and in this way the organisation could come to influence and set standards for the production and management of development knowledge and information, and so influence conceptualisations of development (the definition of problems, the negotiation of solutions and so forth). This would consolidate the position aspired to of being a central actor-network within the development terrain, and the first choice of other actors for information and knowledge, '*the premier global development institution*' (Wolfensohn 2001a: 4, my emphasis). As this occurred so its 'intellectual

¹⁹⁹ The notice from the Bank announcing the establishment of CAW elided its own agency through use of a passive form of phrasing: '[t]wenty-four multilateral and bilateral donor agencies have launched a joint website to share information on country analytic work, the World Bank announced today' (World Bank 2002q). No mention was given of the Bank's role within the site beyond being one partner, and yet its role in site organisation and input is substantial. In January 2003 the Bank provided 11 of CAW's listed 22 Product toolkits and 6 of the 13 examples of 'best practice', and dominated every section of the Document Library, with links to 'Development Gateway Related Topics' further being provided in every area.

technology' would be more securely instituted within the developmental apparatus, providing greater *authority* to both the Bank and those authorities choosing to deploy development discourse in its manner (cf. Rose 1999: 27).

Producing a Common Space of Development

As argued in Chapter Three, knowledge economic discursive practices produce knowledge economies by enabling the development of new areas and forms of calculative agency, through expanding the accepted realms of economic calculability (cf. Callon 1998: 27-28, 1999: 192). The Bank's aim of helping countries make the 'transition to a knowledge-based economy' in order to pursue 'the new opportunities raised by the knowledge revolution' (World Bank 2002i), is a good example of such discursive practices in the development terrain. Through a variety of project-networks the Bank devises tools of calculation, performs calculations, and trains clients and partners in these new calculative practices²⁰⁰. The Bank is a big development player (especially in terms of access to financial, intellectual, and 'social'²⁰¹ capital), and its position and consequent influence situate it well to bring together actors from across the development terrain in catalysing activity around new project-networks. The Bank can then play a major role in establishing such endeavours before withdrawing to a nominally minor position by outsourcing (fostering, FoPs) ventures *once* they are established. Between these two levels of involvement (the initial major and ongoing more minor roles), the Bank will often be positioned to partially determine the later development and application of the tools it fosters²⁰². Yet such *fostered* project-networks could also gain wider acceptance, use and involvement than they would as wholly Bank-run activities, dispersing their influence and effectivity within the development community, and increasing the number of points at which 'Bank' elements negotiate-at-a-distance the constraints within which development is conceived and practised, the choices that are made amongst available development

²⁰⁰ It is the Knowledge Sharing section of the Bank's site, run through the Institute, that speaks of 'putting knowledge on a par with money' and 'adding to our wealth ... and expertise by systematically capturing ... indigenous knowledge' (World Bank 1999f).

²⁰¹ 'Social' in the 'economic' sense of placement within development networks or communities of donor and borrower governments, and non-governmental or civil society organisations that have partnered with it previously.

²⁰² That is, in such cases the Bank acts as a dominant partner in the design of new development 'tools' and the application of their first use. This first use can shape the tools' perceived *appropriate* use, and so who the tools appeal to and their dominant initial user base. This consequently affects something of the tools' subsequent applications.

tools, and the subsequent use these tools are put to. The production of a sense of 'ownership' is most conducive to donors such as the Bank if recipients share in the donor's vision and accept the dominant conceived framework of means for its achievement; that is, they understand and agree with the broad frame of what is being put forward by the Bank to be undertaken.

Such effects stemming from the spread of Bank tools and training practices have consequently been argued by NGO critics to generate 'upstream conditionality' (Powell 2002: 8), gently herding opinions within the Bank's discursive frame of reference so as to render unnecessary other more visible exercises of authority such as the placement of (economic adjustment) conditionalities directly upon loans²⁰³. This usefully and eloquently expresses something of the potentially negative, restricting effects of this discursive influence; but at the same time we need to carefully avoid reading *only* the negative from within these changes, and also of ascribing too much agency to this one organisation. Such discursive normalisation could also produce enabling consequences in improving negotiations of common understandings of development and consequently lending towards improved developmental agency. For countries and civil society actors to feel involved in partnerships, or to feel 'ownership' of projects, they will need to fully *understand* and be able to *participate* in meaningful dialogue over the issues at stake and the viability of alternative proposals. One effect of such processes of normalisation, then, could be that a more fluid space of global policy analysis was produced, enabling more effective global communications on development problems and solutions, increased knowledge sharing, and enhanced developmental capacities arising from better co-ordination (such as the elimination of gaps and overlaps in efforts)²⁰⁴. The Knowledge Assessment Methodology (KAM) mentioned earlier, for instance, potentially makes the Bank's interaction with client countries somewhat more transparent as the variable selection and data collation side of the policy advice equation are made

²⁰³ As the research group Development Initiatives (2002) puts it, many donors see 'ownership' as 'largely rhetorical ... their real concerns continue to revolve around how they can get developing country governments to implement donors' preferred policies and programmes'. Wilks & Lefrançois (2002: 11) further assert that 'In theory, the World Bank is now prepared to let borrowing country governments set their own policies. In practice, it goes to great lengths to influence their choice'.

²⁰⁴ One MOP (the GDLN, World Bank 2002m) has thus clearly stated its mission statement as being to enable 'decision-makers across the developing world to have affordable and regular access to a global network of peers, experts and practitioners with whom they may share ideas and experience that will help them in their work'.

visible in a standardised format, opening up dialogic spaces of contestation between Bank assessors and external groups.

We need also remember that the Bank is only one organisational player amongst a large number of other Northern and Southern governance institutions on the terrain of any normalisation that is occurring, and that trainees could share as much in the desire to be trained in a school of thinking occupied by the Bank as the Bank does to share its understanding. As a result of changes ongoing over the last twenty-five or so years – and partly resulting within some countries from conditionalities attached upon Bank and IMF loans – the market dominates within most governmental discursive practice today and most countries' economies are relatively locked-in to flows of international financial and investment capital. Many countries' policy options are consequently restricted by fear of 'capital unfriendly' practices producing capital flight and drawing the economy into recession. In consequence, in seeking to produce a *normalised* space of development knowledge production and policy application the Bank does not need to institute *new* modes of thinking so much as to contribute to the reproduction of a hegemonic discursive framework by suggesting adjustments that draw in more support and iron out inconsistencies between the minutiae of governmental-economic thinking in different countries. Furthermore, any such normalisation as does occur will always only ever be partial and incomplete because the tools produced, and the project-networks in which members engage, will bear different significance and utility to each. Processes of translation and adaptation will characterise the whole process.

So the increasing focus upon education and training demonstrates a will to produce the subjective conditions under which agents act in a manner appropriate to the reproduction of dominant elements within this discursive apparatus typified in the high-profile public face of the Bank. That is, to shape 'the powers and wills of autonomous entities' in producing more governable subjects, instrumentalising a 'regulated autonomy' such that it might more effectively 'govern at a distance' as a global knowledge manager (Rose 1996: 56-7, Rose & Miller 1992: 180-1). Thus spring forth the many projects and networks focussed towards achieving various educational ends which in the process produce the partners conducive to pushing forward agendas broadly within the Bank's overall vision but without its direct involvement. Through this democratisation of development various actors are

repositioned as more 'responsibilised' agents and programme 'owners'. We see a shift in emphasis away from strict austerity and market liberalisation conditionalities applied to loans, and towards a more neo-liberal form of governing individuals and countries *through their freedom to choose* by influencing the conditions upon which knowledge is produced and such freedoms are exercised (Rose & Miller 1992: 201). By incorporating civil society within these practices of official development and encouraging independent use of the Bank's technologies, non-governmental and civil society organisations become active agents in governing themselves and those they seek to help by the numbers they produce to define and evaluate problems and to think solutions (cf. Rose 1996, 1993, 1991). These points can usefully be illustrated by considering one of the better-publicised and more controversial Fostered Project-Networks the Bank has initiated, the Development Gateway. What follows is an extended case study in the politics of networks for the World Bank.

A Gateway to Development

The Development Gateway (hereafter 'the Gateway') is a project-network endeavour billed as being established to become a gateway to the Internet for all those seeking development knowledge and information, 'a portal website on all aspects of development' (Development Gateway 2000f: 3). The Gateway was designed at first as a Multiple Operator initiative to be housed within the Bank. It was later outsourced, at least in part in response to the critical reception the idea was given by the other development organisations constituting one group of potential partners. The degree and effectivity of this outsourcing has remained a contentious point with Bank critics, but, nonetheless, noticeable changes have been made in the Gateway's means of governance and the way in which it has been presented since the idea was first leaked from the Bank in early 2000²⁰⁵.

The Gateway vision brings together many aspects of the processes of normalisation discussed here²⁰⁶, as well as carrying strong overtones of the Renewal, wherein a Bank project-network acts as a global knowledge manager producing a *common*

²⁰⁵ The first public mention of the Gateway was made in an internal Bank draft dated February 2000 that was leaked to a critical NGO (the Bretton Woods Project, Gateway 2000a) and subsequently distributed as an urgent action to their email group list and posted on their website in April 2000.

²⁰⁶ Such as the standardisation of education and the means of producing, presenting and managing information and knowledge as well as of the training of the producers, presenters and managers.

online global development space, commonly accepted understandings of development, and the knowledge to act upon these. It further goes to illustrate something of the possibilities and limits of fostering and outsourcing the Bank's work, as will be illustrated. The Gateway has been promoted as using the Internet to develop a 'common platform' to 'reinforce a network of communities', providing 'one-stop access to quality data, information and knowledge' for development worldwide (Development Gateway 2000f: 3, 7). In his Comprehensive Development Framework proposal Wolfensohn (1999n: 29) sketched an idea of an Internet site that could maintain constantly updated development information as Annexes relating to all points in the Framework matrix. The Gateway itself was put forward as 'another tool toward achieving the same objectives' as the Framework through the Internet, to be implemented and structured according to its principles and providing the means to promote information access, knowledge sharing and collaboration so as to give more leverage to the Bank's holistic development planning methodology (Development Gateway 2001c, 2000f: 4, 7, World Bank 2000i). The Bank billed itself as playing an 'initial catalytic role' within the Gateway, which would partner with Bank projects 'to leverage and promote existing efforts' to bind World Bank Group units (such as the GDN, the GKP, *infoDev*, and the GDLN) together to increase effectiveness. Bank activities were said to be 'an integral aspect of the Gateway', with its Knowledge Management group working with the Gateway 'to ensure that... Bank work is leveraged to the fullest extent possible' (Development Gateway 2001c).

The Gateway is a distinctly hybrid entity, clearly blurring the lines between notions of 'projects' and 'networks'; conceived as a *site* providing information and knowledge managed by a team of experts and providing different points of access for various users and subject areas; but also as a *portal* to a globally dispersed assemblage of approved member-sites and a series of franchised Country Gateways that manage and present their own content in a style authorised by the central Gateway. The language of networks recurs throughout Gateway literature as it is characterised as a 'network of development solutions' (Development Gateway 2000b: 1) facilitating the establishment of networks of experts, advisors, businesses, development communities, Country Gateways, and knowledge sharing, as well as contributing to the building of a 'networked economy' (Development Gateway 2000g: 6). The approach would appear to be that more is always better as the Gateway promises to

build on *existing* networks and create *new* ones (Development Gateway 2000b: 5). The danger that this proliferation and multiplication of initiatives could produce a form of disempowering network-glut in the manner of Roszak's (1986, 187-201) 'infoglut' noted in Chapter Two (an overabundance of networks leaving agents confused) is given scant attention. For this reason it would be useful to examine what forms of network the Gateway is conceived as building, occupying, and being, for which we need first consider what problems the Gateway was proposed as a solution to.

Problematizing Development Online

'Great strides have been made to harness knowledge and use Internet technology for sustainable development and poverty reduction, but much remains to be accomplished' (Development Gateway 2000b: 2)

As with the Renewal programmes, Gateway literature has frequently opened by seeking to problematise the development field (in this case its online variant) in asserting the need for such an initiative. The Gateway proposal was put forward as being of concern to all those in any way connected with development issues and the net of interests to be served was cast as wide as possible. Development and donor communities were appealed to for their involvement in the establishment of a Gateway which would 'empower' and 'enable' all those involved through improved access to useful knowledge (Development Gateway 2001c, 2000e). A standard situation outline was presented framing the passive mass of the poor as a common object of concern for several broad actor groups (the public and private sectors, donors, and civil society) and positioning economic development at the root of development *per se* (thereby presenting the *common* interest as being that of enabling countries' economies to develop and encouraging participation in the global economy), before highlighting several changes said to have occurred over the past ten years. These included standard Compact and Framework listings (World Bank 1997a, Wolfensohn 1999b) such as a proliferation of new development actors and partnerships, the growth in significance of private capital flows over those of official North-South development assistance, and lack of coordination amongst development groups impeding the performance of projects, preventing groups from learning from each others' past experiences, inhibiting partnerships, and concealing investment opportunities from those with capital.

Now the Internet was also presented within the problematisation as opening up new opportunities for development, knowledge sharing and economic activity, whilst fragmented efforts combined with limited access to technical and personnel resources dampened the potential for using it as a development tool (Development Gateway 2000b: 4). The Bank further problematised the existence (and ease of availability with the advent of the Internet) of different and sometimes incompatible information and knowledge based upon different modes of discourse, and argued that development actors had not coped well in assessing the validity and usefulness of these products of different systems of understanding. The need for the Gateway was not premised upon a *shortage* of available information, therefore, but rather the burden of a *disorganised excess* or overbearing 'wealth' of such (Development Gateway 2000b: 1); although 'great strides' had been made, much remained to be done (Development Gateway 2000b: 2, cf. 2000f: 3). Envisioning the Internet as somewhat anarchic, messy and unreliable, and apparently motivated by the belief that 'making knowledge productive is a management responsibility' (Drucker 1993: 173), it was assumed that those who use the Internet will need editors and guides if they are to make good use of their time online.

The Gateway was therefore outlined as a complementary project to function alongside and aid development actors with regard to their own activities. The need for such an initiative was urged in its *Project Proposal* (Development Gateway 2000f: 24) by stressing that of the 1200 Internet sources examined by the Bank that carried content similar to that proposed for the Gateway, no other portals had its 'objective, breadth and global scope'. It was further stressed that the Gateway, as a *portal*, would of course provide pathways to these other sources, and thereby help those in search of knowledge whilst bearing no risk of 'crowding out' the field. The need to address online content issues was presented as an under-considered 'other side' of problems facing actors concerned with ICT access issues and the digital divide, rather than a new and extraneous concern (Development Gateway 2000f: 5).

The Gateway (2000f: 2) was thereby proposed as a solution to a series of problems, a point which everyone would benefit from passing through in the pursuit of their

goals²⁰⁷. It was billed as becoming *the* Internet development portal covering ‘all aspects of development’, making connections between groups and between areas of concern, and acting as a means of distributing and accessing information upon development topics. A series of eight brief examples were presented in most core literature encompassing the defined actor-groups in a variety of situations, all benefiting from the Gateway (2000b: 3). Three related roles were put forward for the Gateway in this regard. It was presented firstly as a *distilling* device, sorting the wheat from the chaff in the online development information overload. Secondly it was proposed as *harmonising* data sources, bringing knowledges together and overcoming the ‘fragmentation of information’. Finally the Gateway (2000b: 1-3) was considered as a *guide*, assisting others in negotiating the excess of online information and making it ‘easier to access and navigate’. This guide role portrays the Gateway (2001c) as ‘targeting’ groups and providing ‘services’ to its users ‘tailored to the needs of specific audiences’.

So the Gateway-approach to ‘networks’ would appear to be of the main Gateway unit acting as a *central* node establishing and managing connections, *governing* the network. Counter to Castells’ (1999: 5) notion of networks as having no centre, the central portal is here intended to act as a gatekeeper and a central communicative hub through which information and members pass and are vetted, through control of membership, funding and an editorial role. That funding flows through the central hub encourages the build-up of a hierarchical arrangement inducing clustering wherein proximity to the central hub (in terms of viewpoint, style of expression or requested contributions) could be hoped to secure future contributions. As has been noted with the trend in Bank project-networks, this is one in which the Bank (or its associate) remains central to activities.

²⁰⁷ Through a series of components and entry points tailored to various actor roles (the Development Marketplace, the Civil Society Forum, the Government Forum), the Gateway was presented as a resource base providing ‘one-stop access to quality data, information, and knowledge’. Country Gateways – country-owned sites based on the Gateway structure and designed to provide more focussed information and ‘ensure grassroots participation and broad-based ownership’ – were also to be established as ‘franchise partners’ (Development Gateway 2000f: 7-13).

Negotiating the Gateway

Ever since the Gateway's first exposure to criticism, after being brought into the public eye through the leaking of an internal Bank draft document (Gateway 2000a) to the Bretton Woods Project NGO in April 2000, it has been promoted as being intended to become an independent organisation legally distinct from the World Bank and drawing staff from both the Bank and other partners (Development Gateway 2001c, 2000b: 6). Nonetheless there was a felt likelihood amongst a number of development actors that the Bank's policy of partnering and outsourcing ventures might work more to enhance the perceived legitimacy of this endeavour than it would to allow others space to negotiate the visions and objectives that were being pursued, producing a skin-deep diffusion of control. Posting respected NGO names alongside that of the Bank, it was felt, could promote the *perceived* independence of the project if little else, encouraging the involvement of others as well as lending credence to Bank knowledge claims that were posted as 'Gateway' expertise. The leaked Gateway Draft received swift critical feedback which put pressure on the Bank to officially state its plans and articulate its intentions for the mandate, structure, and nature of Gateway operations, including the number and the roles of partners that would be brought onboard.

The Bank was eager to advertise the project as going ahead with the backing of civil society, as an aspect of the performance of the New Bank, and so reacted quickly. By May 2000 an open email discussion forum upon the Gateway had been set up in collaboration with the Bank²⁰⁸ and preliminary *Concept Note* and *Editorial Policy* documents had been produced and placed online for public appraisal (Development Gateway 2000c, 2000e). The language of the documentation was beginning to change, lessening the emphasis upon Bank control of the project. The *Draft Proposal* (Development Gateway 2000a) had declared that the Bank would take 'early leadership' of the project and provide most of the 'government, management and staffing', engaging in partnerships 'with the understanding that the WBG [World Bank Group] will retain editorial independence and control' of the Gateway. By May 2000 the talk was of 'editorial neutrality' rather than independence and control,

²⁰⁸ This happened at Bellanet (www.bellanet.org). The forum archive is now available at <http://www.bellanet.org/gdgprinciples>.

emphasising only that 'generally accepted norms of discourse will be required of all who participate' (Development Gateway 2000e: 1). On a more cosmetic front the Bank's logo was removed from the Gateway banner on the project home-page and the 'Global' in the Gateway's original moniker (Global Development Gateway) was dropped to reduce the similarity with other global Bank initiatives (the Global Development Network, Global Development Learning Network, Global Knowledge Partnership, and so forth). It remained unclear as to whether these shifts were responses to criticism, or to personnel changes within the Gateway Team (as indicated by Bank representative Sarah Cambridge at a consultation meeting in June 2000)²⁰⁹.

More significantly, the Development Gateway Foundation was established in 2001 as an independent organisation to which the Gateway would be handed over. The Gateway became fully established and active in July 2001, the Foundation some months later, but after this point the Bank made efforts to stress that the Gateway and Foundation were now fully independent entities, a truly *fostered* Project-Network set. Nonetheless the Gateway Foundation's – and so the Gateway's – claims to independence have remained suspect in critics' eyes; staffing overlap with the Bank for instance is stronger than observations made on the Global Development Network in the previous chapter, from members of the Gateway Board of Directors to Topic Guides (subject specialists). The Bank is also considered a Founding Member of the Gateway Foundation alongside ten listed country governments (Development Gateway 2003b). Founding Members sit on the Board of Directors, the Bank holding three seats as well as the CEO position. Each Founding Member contributed \$5 million and other corporate bodies have been accepted onto the Board on the basis of similar contributions. A number of seats have been made available to civil society representatives, but the donations have drawn criticism of seats on the Board being obtained through a capital bias in the Gateway's governance (Wilks 2001b, 2001c). Again, as has been noted in the previous two chapters, social agency in the Gateway literature is under-defined, which could have repercussions upon the choices made

²⁰⁹ Sarah Cambridge, at a meeting at the Institute for Development Studies (IDS) in Brighton in June 2000, strongly implied that the initial proposals were made by technical staff unfamiliar with the politically-charged environment in which the Bank operated, and that once more developmentally-minded staff were brought onboard the respective changes were made as a matter of course.

for any 'civil society representatives', and so how the discursive terrain of Gateway operations are or are not altered by this widening of participation²¹⁰.

In Pursuit of a Narrow Vision of the Knowledge Economy

The Gateway vision employs quite particular understandings of knowledge, the knowledge economy, and the use of the Internet in knowledge sharing that demonstrate the dominance of the Bank's Comprehensive Development Framework thinking. A Stiglitzian holism is displayed in the variety of knowledge and development categories to be given space within the portal-site, whilst Wolfensohn's New Bank is performed through the concern to ensure that it operates through a globally-dispersed array of partnerships. Yet still the focus is upon one particular understanding of knowledge over and against any focus on the limits and potentialities, enabling and constraining effects, complementary and contradictory aspects of different ways of knowing (cf. Van der Velden 2002). The notion of simply depositing knowledge upon the Internet develops from an understanding of knowledge as a disembedded, concrete and functional currency, a tangible *something* that can be harnessed, taken out of context and applied elsewhere. This repeats the Bank's conflation of knowledge with the formality of reproducible statistical information noted in Chapter Five (World Bank 1998a: 1, cf. Machlup 1962: 21-2), which frequently results in a prioritisation of information over knowledge given that information is more easily pooled, aggregated, and deployed²¹¹.

The editorial principle noted above that 'generally accepted norms of discourse will be required of all who participate' (Development Gateway 2000e: 1) begs the question of whose discursive norms are being referred to. Given the project's origins and establishment within the Bank, the staffing overlap, and the initial selection of partners for the initiative by the Bank, it can be presumed that for some time at least the

²¹⁰ For instance, 'civil society groups' is sometimes used as a catch-all abbreviation for all that is not in the public and private sectors (Gateway 2000b: 2), whilst at other times a more or less extensive and overlapping list of actor groups is given, as when NGOs or academia are listed separately from civil society (Gateway 2001c, 2000e). To be safe, a hedging phrase such as '... and other key partners' is sometimes added (Gateway 2001f), but its specifics are never dealt with.

²¹¹ Although the two are frequently paired and used interchangeably in Gateway literature for instance, and although the phrase 'where worlds of knowledge meet' has been adopted as the Gateway's (2001a) slogan, in much of its literature (e.g. Development Gateway 2000b, 2000d, 2000e, 2000f, 2000g, 2001a, 2001c) 'information' as a term of reference occurs twice as often as 'knowledge' even when references to 'information technology' are excluded.

Gateway will be dominated by a Bank frame of discourse. As an indication of the current and expected future direction of this Fostered Project-Network (FoP), the Gateway has become increasingly embedded within the community of other Bank initiatives, its logo and links to appropriate Gateway pages appearing on many sections of the Bank's site as well as those of other MOPs and FoPs. It is clearly expected that the Gateway will continue to operate in close partnership, as a coordinative node, within the Bank's dispersal of activities.

As mentioned, the Gateway was conceived as a means of pursuing the objectives laid out in the Comprehensive Development Framework, to be structured around the same set of principles (Development Gateway 2001c). Its compartmentalisation of issues has thus drawn the same criticisms as those of the Framework, pointing to the dangers in its employing a conceptual structure that de-emphasises or de-legitimises actor-groups and developmental problems that cut across the Bank's issue matrices. Such moments of overlap in the critique of different New Bank programmes indicate how country 'ownership' of development policy has been conceived to some extent as the ownership of franchised versions of Bank knowledge products like the County Gateway. This in turn indicates the knowledge governance role that the Bank is adopting through such endeavours. Countries would be free to add content within a Bank-designed structure; but through selective categorisation and pre-set definitions of the necessary conditions that should be met by 'appropriate' Gateway knowledge, certain development issues could come to appear less visible or important than they would by using another set of structuring principles. The Gateway could practice the Knowledge Bank agenda such as to leave diversity within its structure existing as variations within the paradigm of Western economic development planning.

It is useful to bear Tim Jordan's (1991: 128) notion of 'technopower' in mind at this point. Jordan argues that technopower in cyberspace is produced by an increasing reliance upon technological tools that appear to neutrally point the way to better knowledge management, but that in fact produce 'information constituted by the values inherent in the tools'. The Gateway can be regarded as such a technological tool; mediating the information it presents through the values it embodies, and so translating the meaning and intention of *others'* knowledges into its dominant mode of thinking; and establishing and consolidating a preferred knowledge structure by embedding its assertions within supporting networks, shaping understandings of the

world through the classificatory categories and vocabulary it deploys. For example, we might consider the roles of filtering and harmonising online development contributions, and guiding users through the available material. Harmonisation would involve processes of translation to ensure that all information and knowledge is communicable within the same discursive framework. Yet as noted in Chapter Three, translation and standardisation are *political* processes wherein different interests are advanced according to the agenda and approach of those contributing resources to these exercises (Strange 1988: 121, 1996: 165). New harmonised knowledge products will exhibit the values of the translator (and furthermore much might be lost in translation given that some knowledge will not be easily detachable from the social circumstances in which its epistemic community of production is based). Under the Bank's dominant influence such harmonisation would likely function where possible to translate information sources into forms more readily employable as source materials of econometric analyses, yet when the results are presented as 'harmonised' development information then the politics of mediation processes could remain, if unchallenged, relatively inconspicuous.

The overall effect would be to marginalise counter-discourses and so constrain opposition to the dominant development discourse, connecting with the wider Knowledge Bank agenda in educating and training future knowledge producers and users, so as to tailor future knowledge production to fit the dominant Bank-Gateway development model. In this way the Gateway could be considered as hybridising Curry's (1997: 11-12) understanding of the knowledge economy as the industrialisation of knowledge production noted in Chapter Three with a '*putting-out*' system, as multiple *independent* endeavours are fitted to a Gateway framework and begin producing more wool for the Bank's mill. Local producers would be encouraged to act as responsible technological citizens in feeding the central fact-producing calculative machinery, governing themselves by the numbers they produce in accordance with a Bank recipe. In this way the Gateway has sought to be the focal point of a community, and indeed would appear to have aimed at becoming a whole development 'village' more than just the community centre; featuring a discussion café, a marketplace, a library (and other public information services), and an

educational establishment²¹². This will to build the infrastructure of a (development) community marks the Gateway out as being more than just an online portal, and highlights the danger of having one dominant face in the village who acts as café-owner, marketplace-regulator, librarian, and head-teacher.

Finally, it also runs counter to most understandings of the Internet's virtues as an informational resource, and notions of the appropriate skills to develop within knowledge workers in a knowledge economy, to seek to implant a single authoritative editorial tool as *the* guide to development online. Many of the roles the Gateway was established as being intended to fulfil were already being achieved on a multiplicity of smaller independent sites prior to the idea's emergence. Each independent portal may have been incapable of providing everything that the Gateway intended to given their different resource constraints, but in their plurality it was possible that the parts could equal or surpass the Gateway's whole. Just as a variety of knowledges are more valuable in their diversity than any end-result of intellectual mono-cropping resulting from a global standardisation of conditions for the production of truths, so a diversity of development stories will tend to produce more a fruitful discussion than the consensus-space of the Gateway vision. The proposal that the Gateway should act as a filter to clear the field and make life easier for others is less preferable than facilitating the emergence of an effective knowledge-based division of labour, forging stronger links between knowledge workers operating in a decentred fashion, and developing the skills of such workers to search for and critically assess diverse materials for themselves, with no need for any one group to hold undue influence over the publication of officially approved stories of development.

Contesting the Image of the New Bank

During the time of its establishment the Gateway became a part of the wider space of contestations marked out by the Renewal as a whole, over definitions of what the World Bank *is* today, and what its *role* in the development terrain is. I will here outline important elements of the interaction between the Bank and its critics over the

²¹² The March 2001 *Project Proposal* included suggestions of an Aid Effectiveness Exchanges where ideas and stories of success (or failure) could be shared, a Gateway Marketplace to facilitate investments, contracts and so forth, a clearinghouse of information and a database of useful development knowledge, as well as resources to facilitate relevant training.

Gateway before considering strategic approaches to the Bank in this light in the following final chapter. The Bank's response to the suspicious reactions of many critics was, as mentioned, to effect certain changes immediately as well as to engage in a series of open discussion forums. Following the discussions a review piece was produced by the Gateway Team (Development Gateway 2000h). The piece is interesting because it can be read as an attempt to reassert the Bank's authority through a strategic redefinition of actor-positions and interests. In the document Gateway critics were implicitly criticised as holding back the progression of development discourse and practice by clinging to a vision of an Old Bank as an ideological neoliberal machine, whereas now 'the Bank is known as a global institution with a global membership and a recognized capacity to deliver' (Development Gateway 2000h). The piece twice confined more substantial concerns about the Gateway to existing 'mostly in civil society', before then reconstituting this group as two distinct actor positions of North and South, so as to produce politico-economic explanations of a reactionary critical (and predominantly Northern) position.

Suspensions and critical voices were defined as being limited to 'some European civil society organizations' which held 'political suspensions' and were thus less open to discussion, it being 'difficult to change the mindset of such critics'. The perception of the Bank as unresponsive was explained as being due to the critics' own unresponsiveness to evident changes at the Bank, their being 'less inclined to suspend their mistrust', and as a consequence being unable to 'move forward together' with the Bank and its partners. Meanwhile organisations from 'civil society in developing countries' were characterised as having 'overwhelmingly expressed interest in participating'. The 'majority of people' were said to 'fundamentally appreciate the work of the Bank' and appreciate that the Gateway Team were doing their best to negotiate a 'complex problem'. This move to construct and divide off a minority of critics from the majority of supporters, and locate them within Europe, characterised such groups as being regressive in not understanding the needs of Southern organisations (Development Gateway 2000h)²¹³.

²¹³ It was implied that such misunderstanding perhaps arose because of a lack of awareness amongst critics of digital and knowledge resources divides and their not appreciating that things they (the Northern groups) took for granted were desperately needed by groups in the South (such as access to trained individuals who could navigate the Internet and assess materials in building effective subject portals).

As it was, some groups *did* welcome the proposals and some were cautiously interested²¹⁴, but others both North and South rejected the idea and criticism remained trenchant. Consultations were considered to have been insufficient and the Bank was considered to have been unresponsive to feedback, it being suggested that the Gateway Team had already decided what they would do and were carrying out consultations simply as a matter of procedure. It was claimed that the Gateway was still too much a product and a tool of the Bank, advertised as an independent venture but working through a Bank development agenda and threatening to squeeze out alternatives. The Gateway was effectively dismissed as a product of *Renewal-wash*. The critical response seemed to be that the Bank might be singing the notes of its new decentralisation and partnership song, but that its heart wasn't in the performance, and the result was just *another* Bank intervention in the development field.

In spite of the Bank's depiction of the Gateway's receiving mostly support from the South, early in 2001 a forum in South Africa (with representatives covering thousands of South African NGOs, trade unions and churches) authored a letter to Bank President James Wolfensohn to 'firmly and unequivocally state [their] intention not to participate' in the project (Kabissa-Fahamu 2001). Several 'open letter' emails were also penned as statements of complaint or of opposition and non-engagement that gained hundreds of signatures from organisations and individuals around the world pledging to endeavour to construct alternatives²¹⁵. As a result of such strategic non-involvement the Internet presence of direct vocal opposition to the Gateway has declined since the project's establishment. Some Southern groups have focused instead on ensuring that alternatives are available and fully functioning, so as to detract from demand for the Gateway rather than contributing to its presence centre-stage in the online development community, even if only as a force that is opposed. Choike in South America (<http://chasque.choike.org>), and Africa Pulse in Africa (www.africapulse.org) represent two regional development networks that have started

²¹⁴ See for instance the more positive review given of the EDC discussion forum (EDC 2001), and OneWorld Europe's summary of its meetings held in Brussels, 2000 (OneWorld Europe 2000).

²¹⁵ For instance the Bretton Woods Project (2000b), a London-based research organisation and pressure group, produced an open letter of disapproval back in September 2000, in response to the first series of negotiations with civil society. Following further negotiations the Voice of the Turtle (2001), a small independent online journal, orchestrated an open letter of non-involvement pledging to 'avoid all contact, whether official or otherwise, with the World Bank's Development Gateway'.

up since, and at least in part in reaction to, the Gateway²¹⁶. These sites work to achieve some of the same goals in a less coordinative central portal sense.

The stories of the two networks is illuminating in terms of showing both how critical groups have attempted to position the Gateway as an unnecessary intervention, and also how the greater dispersal of Bank resources through engagement with Externally-Oriented Project-networks (EOPs) could usefully enable more independent and 'owned' initiatives to blossom. Project co-ordinator Roberto Bissio is upbeat about Choike, claiming that it is competing effectively with the Gateway in its Internet traffic ranking²¹⁷. Africa Pulse meanwhile is at present unfunded and described as "ticking over", rather than being developed'. The project co-ordinator Alan Finley describes a 'general donor disinterest' in such projects after the first flurry of funding for the One World initiative. Indicating the importance of calls for Gateway funds to be dispersed to independent networks, Finley stresses that funding is the greatest limitation to the project. With the funds, he insists, 'the site would fly'²¹⁸.

It is interesting to note how resistance to the Gateway emerged in some form both inside and outside the Bank such that key documents were leaked to external groups and posted online to draw the attention of the critical community²¹⁹. Resistance to the Gateway was then coordinated in a fairly decentralised fashion through open letters and email and web-based updates. When this dispersed and critical global online resistance engaged with the Bank in criticising its dominant cultural practices, changes were produced. Even if not to the satisfaction of critics, it is significant nonetheless that the Bank moved so quickly to change aspects of the Gateway and

²¹⁶ Choike is coordinated by the Third World Institute (TWI), a Uruguay-based development NGO network that filed a corruption claim against the Gateway in July 2001, and AfricaPulse by SANGONeT, a coordinator of the meetings that produced the letter from South Africa. To quote Roberto Bissio, one of the Choike organisers at TWI, 'we decided to put our energies to constructively show through Choike that better things can be done with so much less'. Personal communication with Roberto Bissio, Director of Social Watch, rbissio@chasque.net, 15th April 2003.

²¹⁷ Bissio cites results from Alexa (www.alexa.com), a public Internet traffic ranking service. Alexa results in April 2003 show Choike roughly 20% behind in terms of user reach, but with users accessing more than three times as many web-pages within the site once they are there. With relation to both figures Choike's ratings had improved since the last three month period whilst the Gateway's had declined. Alexa's ratings results are however known to be less reliable the lower the rating of the site, and neither the Gateway nor Choike have particularly high ratings values. Data downloaded from www.alexa.com on 15th April 2003.

²¹⁸ Personal communication with Alan Finley, alanf@sangonet.org.za, 14th April 2003..

²¹⁹ As mentioned, a draft proposal of the Gateway was leaked to the Bretton Woods Project early in 2000, with the result that the idea became general public knowledge before it had been intended to become so.

engage in open fora to discuss further potential changes. The most significant of these changes was to formalise a transition of the Gateway from a Multiple-Operator to a Fostered Project-network with the creation of the Gateway Foundation as an independent governing organisation. Even with all the critical comment that has been passed on the inadequacies of this externalisation, it is still perhaps more than was initially intended and than would have been done had the Bank not faced the strength of criticism it did so soon after the emergence of the Gateway idea. The Foundation at least sets down on paper a separation of organisations that can be monitored and critiqued by watchers of the Bank and the Gateway. As Stone (2001) writes of the Global Development Network's ability to evolve now that it has come out from under the Bank's wing, so the same might be hoped of the Gateway. The Internet potentially offers avenues for circumventing the epistemic dominance of economic elites, redefining 'development', and sharing knowledge upon alternative ways of living. The Gateway's influence upon this potentiality depends very much upon the Bank's intentions, how these intentions and their realisation are shaped through interaction with its partners and critics, and consequently the way in which the governance and ownership structures of local projects such as Country Gateways are practiced and adapted.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen how the Bank's dispersal through Renewal enables it to produce processes of normalisation over development discourse, on- and off-line, producing and training the current and future knowledge producers, managers and users in shaping how development agents and countries come to be positioned within the discursive practice of the 'new' economy. Normalisation can produce enabling effects, such as the Bank would appear to desire from reading the discourse with which it surrounds its performance, developing a shared frame of understanding amongst an increasing number of actors and so a smoother conversation upon the procedures of development once the ends and a substantial number of the means have been agreed upon. However this production of consensus can also consolidate relations within the development terrain around the Bank's approach to development, indicating the direction that *all* should be headed in their efforts to improve standards of living and sketching out desired actor-positions for developing countries in a

knowledge economy. Through the exercise of such influence upon developmental discursive practice *other* understandings of development can be further marginalised and the dominant approach of the Bank (and others performing the mainstream of development discourse) *reproduced* and consolidated as the only seemingly valid way forward.

Yet the opportunity is there within the Bank's own discourse to push for further change. The concern to perform the Renewal and become a dispersed Bank that listens to the poor lends strength to those critical voices still engaged in conversation with the Bank (and so whose voices are listened to as legitimate contributions and not just 'name-calling', Wolfensohn 1997g). The examples of the Global Development Network and the Development Gateway, and the changes brought about in response to criticism, are illustrative of this point. With regard to the Gateway for instance, despite the dominant trend exhibited for consolidating a technical-economic understanding of development, development discourse within the Bank and its project-networks is a heterogeneous affair, all the more so the more diverse are its partners. The more the Gateway is monitored inside and outside the Bank, the less chance there should be that it is dominated by an officially-approved narrative of development as economic growth; and the more it faces resistance by critical voices recognised as *valuable* by the Bank, the more it might be pulled further away from the Bank to allow its self-development, as Diane Stone (2001: 25, 2000: 249) hopes might happen for the Network. It is to the potentialities of such resistance for pushing the Bank further in its own discourse, as well as the politics of defining *valid* and *valuable* voices worthy of the Bank's engagement, that we now turn in the next chapter.

Discourses of Reform and Abolition: Diffusing and Defusing the Bank

Introduction

This final chapter will consider the discourses of reform and abolition that have continued to surround the World Bank throughout its latest efforts at renewal. It will firstly review the potentialities and limits that have been observed within the Bank's knowledge-renewal and the *politics of networks* it embodies, noting the modes of discursive practice and forms of association the Bank has become involved with, and the overlap within these with the patterns of repetition and difference characterising the wider discursive shifts considered in Part One. Thinking about the contemporary and potential future positionings of an organisation operating *within* and acting *upon* the institutional constraints that in part define it and shape its reproduction, the question of whether the Bank should be reformed or abolished is argued to be an unproductive distraction. However it is observed to be a distraction that has been used by the Bank in defining the terrain of its own discourse of reform and the limits of 'legitimate' contributions and strategies of engagement by its critics.

It is proposed here instead that a range of more and less 'radical' positions are capable of applying pressure for change in a productive division of labour, opening the discourse of reform up to new contributions from both within and without the organisation in a manner that could enable different voices and different perspectives upon development to be heard more clearly. Associations or 'networks' of different critical agencies operating around and *across* official Bank boundary-lines, in the manner that has been observed in the previous two chapters, represent the strongest contemporary possibilities for opening the organisation up. Encouraging a dispersal of its operations could help to detach the power of its truths from the hegemonic conditions under which they currently operate (cf. Foucault 1984a: 75), which could in turn encourage a reconceptualisation of the Bank's role within – and thereby adaptations in the wider discursive practices of – knowledge economics and development.

The Knowledge Economy, the Knowledge Bank, and the State of Renewal

Several common qualities have been noted between the discourses considered in this work, the first of which is their mobile and open nature. Each is firstly dominated by a small number of (frequently governmental-economic) players who exercise strong influence over the discourse's practise in the production and reproduction of hegemonic sets of relations. Nonetheless the multiple and dispersed nature of contributions ensure that the discourse ultimately remains relatively underdetermined and open, and that such relations remain always somewhat contingent and unstable. Secondly, patterns of repetition and difference mark all the discursive shifts considered; repetition occurs as clusters of interests work to ensure that the discourse reproduces preferred understandings, but each new turn can produce openings for the pursuit of *different* understandings and practices. Finally there is the importance of the *dramatic* performance of discourse; the production of events that perform a moment of rupture in marking a shift, such as the G8's *Okinawa Charter on the Global Information Society* (2000), President Truman's inaugural address in 1949, and the World Bank's (1998a) *World Development Report 1998/99*. That such moments occur some time after the beginning of the events to which they refer is less significant than the buzz of discussion that they prompt and that mark them as historical events.

The discourses and their practise develop, at least in part, through the continual presence of critical interjections. Hegemonic moments of discursive formation can develop through the production of 'common' points of interest and the alignment of actor-networks around these, but such moments are necessarily temporal and alterable in their reproduction. Points of discursive *conjuncture* (overlappings between different discourses) and discussions around key discursive *events* are two moments that have been considered here wherein spaces of opportunity can arise for critical contributions to be heard more clearly. Such moments can potentially be used to produce restricted autonomous zones wherein different practices might be experimented with. The pursuit of such opportunities might not *uproot* the dominant set of discursive practices, but *could* stimulate more and less productive modifications – as with effects within mainstream economic practices stemming from the spread of

open source and free software discourse²²⁰, and again with regards to how it is now quite usual for once extraneous variables to be included in the development discourse processes of calculation and planning²²¹.

Similarly the Bank can be seen as having responded to shifts in the discourses it inhabits and contributes to, as well as to criticisms of its own actions. The organisation has performed a Renewal of its structuring through drawing upon aspects of all four discursive streams outlined in Chapter Two; bringing *post-industrialist* concerns (such as Machlup's (1962) conflation of knowledge and information and Bell's (1974) concern with commodifiable, appropriable forms of knowledge) together with casual *futuristic* talk of leapfrogging stages of industrial development, and strong practical organisational concerns with discourses of *knowledge management* and *networking*. The Bank's orientation has been affected by this discourse of Renewal, lending greater rhetorical emphasis to its knowledge-related work such as policy advice, capacity-building and education and training, over its more *bank-like* lending operations²²². As well as perspectives within the Bank upon the *value* of formulating and implementing consistent and stringent intellectual property rights legislation – consistent with the position of owners and producers of formalised intellectual 'capital' – more developmental concerns upon the economic treatment of knowledge have also been expressed with regards to protecting indigenous knowledges, encouraging knowledge sharing, and tailoring IPR regimes to facilitate Southern access to new knowledge and technologies.

The Knowledge Bank initiative has nonetheless been criticised as running too closely parallel to the governmental discourses explored in Chapter Three in two ways. Firstly through tending to conflate knowledge and information and elide the *multiplicity* of ways of knowing, thereby lending legitimacy to the will to standardise, translate and reproduce the multiplicity as a singular and more capital-friendly Knowledge™ (e.g.

²²⁰ The spread of such discourses has led to attempts at extending the principles beyond the realm of software with the Simputer and Open Content, the adoption of open source principles into the practices of large corporations like IBM and Netscape, and the use and advocacy of open source by governments North and South, as mentioned in Chapter Three. This could in turn have further effects upon the stances governments adopt within negotiations upon the harmonisation and implementation of intellectual property rights legislation.

²²¹ Such as the environment, education, and the question of the role of the state in establishing and regulating markets.

²²² Although, as mentioned in Chapter Five, the Bank (2001a: 9) has stressed that emphasising its work in 'knowledge, advice, and capacity building' does *not* imply any reduction in its lending activities.

King & McGrath 2000a, Caddell 1999). Secondly in tending to promote knowledge's treatment as a form of capital through discourses upon its status as a public (economic) good, as well as upon the need to consolidate a regime of intellectual property rights ownership (e.g. Mehta 1999a, 1999b). Similar variations upon the *same* elements of Bank economic and development discourse thereby prevail in its Knowledge Bank posture, through the concern to *open economies up*; to the use of (Northern) Foreign Direct Investment (for development); and to international trade, encouraging countries to adapt and find a 'new' role within the international trade of 'new' goods and services. The fear of such critics is that the Bank's pursuit of this long-standing interest could strengthen the likelihood of many contemporary economic and social *inequalities* being maintained throughout any economic and social *developments* in the roles of information and knowledge – with perhaps a little geographical reordering and a *few* more opportunities being produced for *some* (not all).

Such lines of criticism are entirely appropriate, yet at the same time we must be careful not to envision such a final outcome as being inevitable; to do this would be to retreat into a dystopic vision reasserting the perpetual dominance of capital over human interests and refusing consideration of events in their particularity and difference. What we need instead to do is to accept these negative aspects of repetition (almost as a matter of course) and to look for and work to strengthen the slim *positive* opportunities within any such re-ordering of economic activities. The World Bank is not a monolithic creature consisting of automatons producing new variants of a standard economic narrative, let alone producing the same answer to the question of knowledge's role in fostering development. As Diane Stone (2001: 22) has put it, '[t]o portray the Bank in this way misses the complexity of perspectives within the organisation'. At the same time, the dominant voices are *too* dominant and long-standing, too institutionalised and too protective of their own professional interests, to allow all but a handful of dissenting voices within their sphere of influence and to give much weight to those few. The circle is not entirely closed, but neither is it very effectively open. As was outlined in Chapter Five, it is *restrained* through selective employment practices geared towards rewarding those who subscribe to an 'approved' knowledge system; through career progression structures, organisational training courses and reorganisations that consolidate this, ensuring discordant

opinions and knowledge do not frequently become too vocal within the organisation; and through a culture of censorship that cuts short the career-paths at the Bank of many who choose to speak out differently.

The dominant organisational tendency that has been observed in this study is for the Bank to *nominally* diffuse its activities whilst *retaining* a large degree of control. Returning to the recurrent metaphor of development as a drama, the Knowledge Bank performance is best considered as a different *scene* within the same *act* (much like the knowledge economy discourse upon which it is based); some aspects of the script have changed as knowledge has become a more dominant focus, but much of the rest of the performance has remained substantially unaltered²²³. Some new lines have been written into the Bank's script, picking up on the language of decentralisation and partnership as a result of critical interventions it has faced, and discursive trends it has adopted, but is currently not well-practised in performing a new role. As a result the performance is more in the manner of a pantomime routine, asking most of those constructed as the 'audience' (civil society) to participate nominally – staying in their seats and calling out scripted lines – whilst others are selected by the main actor (the Bank) to come onstage *at its direction* and enliven the performance without straying too far from the main script. The Bank *is* changing, but ongoing pressure needs to be applied to guide these changes and push them further; and tools to this end are provided in the Bank's own experimentation with discourses of partnership and decentralisation.

Discourses of World Bank Reform and Abolition

As a result of such patterns of constrained change and repetition, many have remained unhappy with the performance and direction of the Bank under Wolfensohn's renewal. Critical responses have consequently emerged from a variety of places which indicate something of the different interests that are invested in the organisation's functioning – including the US Congress and its International Financial Institutions Advisory Commission (IFIAC 2000) that was established to report on the

²²³ The list of central actors and the dynamics of their interaction (economic and political elites, national governmental institutions and multilateral organisations performing the hegemonic discursive form of development), played out against a backdrop of structural inequalities around the same scene-setting devices (such as the unmarked and passive mass of 'the poor').

contemporary position and purpose of the Bank and IMF, other development actors, and a good number of the Bank's own staff²²⁴ (see e.g. Bello 2000a, 2002b, Rich 2000, Fidler 2001, Pender 2001, Wade 2002b, Easterly 2003). In response to this diversity of critical voices the organisation has, as we have seen, sought to emphasise its newly-scripted role as a *listening* Bank. Whilst it would be difficult for the Bank to act much differently towards criticisms coming from its major donor-governor institutions such as the US Congress, the shift towards discursive practices of widening participation *in* and ownership *of* development projects express the same concern for the organisation to be *seen as listening* by its non-governmental critics. As has been argued in relation to the Bank throughout Part Two, slim opportunities for fostering changes in the organisation's discursive practices result from these listening performances; however such opportunities exist within the limiting context of the Bank's proclivity for defining the discursive terrain to the advantage of its dominant sets of interests.

One recent turn in the Bank's partnership discourse has engaged with the critical responses of those of its potential partners within what it now recognises as civil society organisations (CSOs). As has been noted, this referent has been introduced into the Bank's discourse but remains under-analysed and under-defined, and hence too broadly inclusive (incorporating NGOs and a wide array of other non-government actor-networks). The Bank's response has been to define and divide this extensive and ambiguous grouping into two reductive and morally-coloured, caricatured actor-positions; of those *radical-abolitionists* only interested in engaging in 'critical protests' against it, as against a 'more informed' and 'maturing' range of *moderate-reformers*, with whom it can sit down and engage in 'constructive dialogue' (World Bank 2003t: 21-25)²²⁵. Since, as mentioned in Chapter Five, the discourse of self-reform has been an organisational normality at the Bank for some time, the position of the moderate-reformer critics can then be read as those *helping the Bank* to reform. Unfortunately various Bank critics have also often adopted these caricatured positions as their own and denounced the aspirations of the 'other' as utopian (see e.g. Bond 1999a, 2000b,

²²⁴ As indicated by the mentioned reprisals and departures of Stiglitz, Kanbur, Easterly and Ghani, and the leaking of draft documents on the Development Gateway.

²²⁵ This concern is not entirely new, but is being *stressed* anew in the discourse upon the Bank's channels of partnership (see e.g. World Bank 1995b: 23: 'Some NGO critics are fundamentally opposed to the Bank and all that it does', 'It is important...that concerns submitted to the Bank by responsible NGOs with relevant local knowledge be taken seriously').

2003, Locker 2000, Socialist Alternative 2001). Although such comments are often framed as comradely criticism, they are unproductive insofar as the *end-goals* of both 'reformers' and 'abolitionists' are quite blue-sky ambitions.

Between these under-defined and over-simplistic caricatures of potential partners and critical agencies, a generous space is created within which the Bank can adopt a moral high-ground in drawing the perceived limits on 'valid' positions and strategies adopted towards it and choosing *who* it engages with and *how*, justifying non-engagement with a *bad* radical abolitionist outside as against *good* reformist talkers. In this way it can, for instance, praise the Jubilee 2000 coalition as an effective *moderate* dialoguer without mentioning that its pressure-raising campaign-work has also included what the Bank terms the 'more radical...obstructionist' actions of those with whom there is 'little basis...to expect that constructive relations are possible or desirable' (such as forming 'human chains' in an attempt to prevent Bank and IMF representatives accessing their annual meetings, World Bank 2003t: 21-2, cf. Jubilee 2000 UK 2001).

These simple caricatures of critical actor-positions draw crude and distracting dividing lines and elide the overlapping diversity of end-goals held to and tactics used by different critical actor-networks. Different *perspectives* do exist in the sense of those who speak of reform of the Bank and those who speak of the need for its abolition; the former being all those who hope that the Bank can (through the application of pressure) engage more fully in reforms and behave in a manner more likely to promote development (as they understand it); and the latter including all those who see the Bank's problems (emphasising variously the political, economic, structural and cultural) as too overweening, such that the best hope is to close the organisation down. Yet the most productive space for co-ordinating oppositional groupings in pressuring the Bank for change exists at the broad intersection between Reformers who want to change the Bank and other International Financial Organisations (IFOs) so radically that they would not be the organisations we know, and Abolitionists who realise that short of changing the *institutions* within and upon which the IFOs are built, any vacuum of power left by their abolition would be filled by very similar siblings. Alternative caricatures can usefully be drawn up to illustrate this point, re-considering important commonalities and differences different critical positions; in this light we can

speak of Northern Protectionists, Liberal Regulation Advocates, End-Goalh Activists, and Social, Economic and Environmental Justice (SE EJ) Critics.

Re-defining a Common Ground

The views of the Northern Protectionists, firstly, are framed in terms of maintaining and advancing Northern-country political and economic interests; a strong representation of this group can be made by elements within the US Congress and Treasury. The publication in March 2000 of a Congress-mandated Report commonly referred to as the 'Meltzer Report' (the report of the International Financial Institution Advisory Commission, chaired by Professor Allan Meltzer, IFIAC 2000) brought the debates between Northern Protectionists wider attention and illustrated how concerns within this camp stretch across the reform-abolition boundary. The Commission took the position that the Bank was irrelevant to poverty reduction, and operated in counter-productive competition with both other Regional Development Banks and private capital. It therefore suggested radically reducing the size of World Bank operations to minimise the chances of it squeezing out private finance capital opportunities, renaming the Bank a World Development Agency; terminating the World Bank Group (merging the IFC into the Bank – the IBRD and IDA – and closing the MIGA); cancelling all debts owed by the Heavily-Indebted Poorest Countries (HIPC)s and focussing on grants over loans; and gradually ceasing lending to countries other than the HIPC)s²²⁶. Such 'reforms' would effectively close down the Bank-as-we-know-it if adopted in full, and it has been argued that this was the intention of some Commission members (Griesgraber 2000, Schalatek 2000). Lawrence Summers, in his position as then US Secretary to the Treasury, responded cautiously and critically to the Report by rejecting a number of its core proposals on the basis that they would *weaken* the Bank's ability to 'serve vital U.S. interests' in promoting market reforms in developing countries (US Treasury 2000). Summers (1999) married this pursuit of US interests with the older mainstream development discourse contention that economic growth is almost inherently good for the poor, being necessary and nearly sufficient for development and therefore poverty

²²⁶ The Commission suggested that the Bank cease lending to countries with an annual per capita income over \$4000; and offer only restricted assistance to countries with per capita income over \$2500, phasing this out as the income rises (International Financial Institutions Advisory Committee 2000: 10-12).

reduction. Other Protectionists have meanwhile more explicitly called for the Bank to be closed down or even *more* radically restricted, on the basis that it merely aids countries who then compete for American industry and jobs (Buchanan 1999, Whalen 1995)²²⁷.

A second group which we can consider is the Liberal Regulation Advocates. This group would incorporate many longstanding critical academics (Wade 2001a, 2001d, 2002a, 2002b, Gray 1999, 2002, Pincus & Winters 2002a) alongside more recently emergent advocates for change such as investment banker George Soros (1998) and a number of prominent figures that have been associated with the Bank (Stiglitz 2002, 2000b, Easterly 2002, 2003, Kapur 2000, 2002, Kanbur 2001, Clark 2002). This group of critics maintain that the world needs a world bank in some form; either in the sense of a multilateral organisation to regulate the world economy and ensure the production and protection of 'global public goods' such as the environment and knowledge (e.g. Wade 2001c, Gray 1999, Soros 1998); or else a stripped-back Development Bank akin to that of the Meltzer proposals (Pincus & Winters 2002a). Advocates tend also to be in accord with the Bank in its dominant conception of development as an outcome of economic growth (Wade 2002b: 234-5, cf. Easterly 2003, Stiglitz & Squire 1998, Fidler 2001, Pincus & Winters 2000a). Debates then remain over how such growth is defined and achieved and *how* central various forms of it are to development. They tend to be critical of the level of influence Northern member states (and especially the US) exert over the Bank, and stress the need for more transparent and democratic regulation (Wade 2002b, Fidler 2001, Kapur 2000, 2002)²²⁸.

Importantly there is also a tendency to be critical of Northern NGOs in the same regard; the greater involvement of 'civil society' in the Bank's operations is not always viewed positively by such critics. Many respect the organisation's *potential* for undertaking a restricted operational mandate effectively (when it is stated clearly and set within an appropriate framework of governance and accountability), and fear that under Wolfensohn the Bank has been becoming 'soft-headed' in its attitude to NGOs

²²⁷ See also for example papers presented at the Cato Institute (www.cato.org) and National Center for Policy Analysis (<http://www.ncpa.org>) such as Thibodeau 1996, Bartlett 1997, and Bovard 1987.

²²⁸ In this they share common ground with many more critical NGOs and even the United Nations Development Program, which in its *Human Development Report 2002* (UNDP 2002) stressed many of the same points upon the Bank's democratic deficit, and problems of accountability and transparency.

and their perspectives on development (Fidler 2001). Robert Wade (2001c) has drawn analogy between the situation the Bank currently faces and Gulliver's encounter with the Lilliputians in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*; with the Bank being tied down by external interests vying for its attention, from donor and borrower government interests, through potential and actual corporate partners, to an array of civil society organisations focussed upon global, national and special interests. Wade upturns the metaphor of large organisations as ships being steered by a manager at the helm, to posit the Bank as a large ship whose progress in *any* direction is severely impinged by its being pulled in many directions by a morass of small tugboats (cf. Wade 2002b, Fidler 2001).

Thirdly, at the far end of the 'scale' or reform and abolition we could position what I have referred to as the End-Goal Activists, resolute and determined actor-networks intent upon dismantling and abolishing the Bank, the IMF, the WTO and the global systems of 'capitalism' on which they are seen as being based, defined primarily in terms of 'corporate greed' and 'US imperialism' (e.g. Locker 2000, Howard 1999, Socialist Alternative 2002, Fighting the Octopus 2001). The storybook analysis forms an emotive, impassioned call to various forms of violent and non-violent direct-action, as seen in the more headline-grabbing moments of protest in recent years at meetings of the World Bank, the IMF, and other assemblies of national and multilateral political and economic representatives. Here the end goal *is* the immediate goal. It is openly acknowledged by these groups that the problems they take issue with concern the institutional context the Bank operates within and performs through its activities, and that changing the Bank *alone* is unlikely to be either possible or particularly effective. Thus calls are made to bring *all* banks and financial institutions into 'public ownership' (Socialist Alternative 2002) as part of a dystopic-utopic portrait of where we are now and where we *could* be.

These three actor-position caricatures leave a broad remaining mass which I have here labelled as the Social, Economic and Environmental Justice (SE EJ) Critics. This umbrella covers a broad array of research and campaign actor-networks concerned with various aspects and understandings of environmental sustainability, and social and economic justice, in the conception and practise of development. Within this group the boundaries of reform and abolition most clearly break down and other more interesting questions emerge concerning the discursive practices of networks,

partnerships and speaking for others. What we could call the SEEJ Reformer sub-category returns us firstly to the Bank's own *official* history of engagement with its critics, mentioned briefly in Chapter Five with reference to the NGO Working Group on the World Bank (NGOWG). The NGOWG's position was in effect quite similar to that of the Bank in admitting the *legitimacy* of direct protest actions as being sometimes necessary, but playing down the *credibility* of such approaches in insisting that difficult organisational changes tend to be more 'genuine and lasting' when they develop from negotiations between the Bank and its critics (NGOWG 2000a: 4). Other SEEJ Reformers work with ideas that would, if implemented, be equivalent to *reinventing* the organisation; criticising the Bank's 'mission creep' in the manner of some Advocates and arguing that it needs to be restricted to a clearly defined developmental mandate both to streamline its functioning and enable effective monitoring and regulation (Bretton Woods Project 2003a, Wilks 2001a, Caufield 1997); and calling for a democratic upheaval in the Bank's governance, organisation, and structuring, as well as a radical overhaul of its transparency and accountability (FOEI 2001). On this latter point at least the calls of both certain Advocates *and* SEEJ Reformers also tie with aspects of the Meltzer Report's recommendations²²⁹.

Stronger claims for reform find strong points of overlap with the sub-category of SEEJ Abolitionists who argue that the World Bank is incapable of reducing poverty and promoting development, being organisationally and culturally stuck within paradigms that cannot handle contemporary global economic and political events (Bello 2000a, 2000b, Danaher 2001). This critique contends that the Bank is ultimately *and inevitably* a product of Northern capital interests, and can therefore work in no other fashion. Calling for its reform is in effect being an apologist for the system (polishing 'Washington's boot on Third World necks', Bond 2001a), because as the Bank internalises each claim placed before it, its organisational and cultural momentum will ensure that these are turned into new variants upon its same functioning. Calls for participation in project definition result in the nominal inclusion of civil society groups within their own compartmentalised ghetto (a comment that was passed on the 'civil society' unit within the Gateway), and calls for greater ownership of development

²²⁹ A number of SEEJ Critics and Advocates saw the Report as promoting *some* good policy changes 'often for the wrong reasons', even if many other proposals were 'no more acceptable, or even worse, than the practices it object[ed] to' (Wood 2000, cf. Wade 2001c, Christian Aid 2003, Bretton Woods Project 2003). Approved changes included renaming the organisation to clarify its role, establishing independent evaluation procedures, and creating more equitable voting structures (Wood 2000).

programmes result in transfers of power once all controls are fixed (as was again said of the Framework programmes and Gateway franchises, cf. Wilks & Lefrançois 2002). To shut down the Bank is therefore said to be the only progressive option for which critics can strive²³⁰.

However many who wish to abolish the Bank would concur that within the contemporary *institutional* context (the dominant international systems of capital regulation) there is a need for global *organisations* to act as rule-setters and regulators (of international trade, investment and capital flows, and so forth); in short, for some restricted system of global governance (cf. Pincus & Winters 2002a: 18-19). For example, beyond the headlined absolutism Walden Bello (2002a: 116-8) talks of decommissioning, neutering, or radically reducing the powers of the Bank and turning it into 'just another set of actors coexisting with and being checked by other international organizations'. Campaigner and writer Patrick Bond (2000a) meanwhile writes at moments of the Bank's needing to be 'delegitimized, de-funded and decommissioned', talking resolutely of the dangers of reform wasting time and lending legitimacy to neoliberal practices (Bond 2000a, 2000b); and at other moments emphasises that what is *most* needed is 'truly democratic policy-making', indicating that the organisational context within which this happens is less important than the governance and representation structures put in place (Bond 2001b: 27). The *World Bank Bonds Boycott* (WBBB) and *Fifty Years Is Enough* (50 Years) are two prominent examples of campaigning actor-networks coordinating groups whose perspectives transgress the reform/abolish 'divide'²³¹. Whilst the achievement of these campaigns' stated objectives (such as ending structural adjustment and cancelling debts owed) would turn the Bank into something radically *different* from the form in which it is

²³⁰ Invoking the analogy of a Kuhnian paradigm shift, Walden Bello (2000a) has argued that we need to stop tinkering at the edges of the machine and instead cut clean from the Bank and seek simpler, more effective solutions. The Bank, Bello says, resembles 'a dinosaur that is slowly sinking in a bog of its own making' but which highlights its renewals and partnership programmes in order to detract attention from its own identity crisis.

²³¹ Whilst Patrick Bond (2000a) frames his interest in the WBBB campaign as seeing it as wanting to 'keep [the Bank and the IMF] running, until they drop of exhaustion' (Bond 2000a), the WBBB (2000, my emphasis) lists itself as 'building moral, political, and financial *pressure*' on the Bank when it encourages others to avoid holding Bank bonds (issued on financial markets to raise capital). The 50 Years (2002) coalition is meanwhile billed in some of its literature as demanding 'the immediate suspension' of the Bank's 'policies and practices' (50 Years 2002), whilst elsewhere on its site it is billed as representing both reformist and abolitionist-minded critics and calling for a 'profound or fundamental "transformation"' of the organisation (Ambrose 2002b).

defined by its currently dominant mode of operations, it would not necessarily have to be *abolished* to achieve these goals.

So as can be seen, there are many different points of overlap between so-called 'reformers' and 'abolitionists', such that differently-minded SEEJ Critics can frequently work together and often also draw upon the support and energies of their outlying flanks, the Advocates and the Activists. Devolution, democratisation and the restricted mandate put forward by some SEEJ Abolitionists form part of an agenda very closely parallel to that of a number of SEEJ Reformers and Advocates, whilst the Activists more optimistically but perhaps more consistently demand the same *plus*. To this extent the reform-abolition question constitutes an unproductive distraction (in the sense of an interesting question posed at the wrong level). The question relates ultimately to how we might alter the current institutions of capital regulation so as to more effectively ensure the provision of scarce resources to peoples according to their needs, and within that questions of how needs are to be fairly defined. To refuse the question of whether the Bank should be abolished or only reformed may seem to be sitting on the fence and not critically engaging with the organisation. Yet given the different points of overlap between the outlined positions it can be seen that the fence is a flimsy discursive construct. The critical community consists of actor-networks engaging in a broad field of activities, and whilst some may paint lines upon the grass there are no *different sides to a fence*. To elide the question of reform versus abolition is more than just pragmatic realism. A utopian vision similarly drives this view, but it is utopia in the open and underdetermined sense of a non-place, an *other* place, the sense that we need to be 'elsewhere'. What is refused is a caricature portrait of where we should be.

Diffusing and Defusing the Bank

Eliding the question of reform versus abolition is also important insofar as the discourse of moderate and radical end-goals and strategies is one the Bank has itself adopted and adapted in constructing a moral discourse that defines and divides those that it *will* and *will not* engage with, in the process adding weight to the claims of legitimacy for its own discourse of reform, as has been noted (cf. Nelson 1996). These dichotomies can be refused as part of a process of strategic discursive

engagement with the Bank aimed at opening up its discursive practices of reform and partnership to voices other than those most often and most easily heard, and to the complexities of actor-positions that can be considered beyond these reductive caricatures. In considering strategies of engagement for generating *pressure* for change and shaping the *direction* of changes, the discourse of those both within and without the boundary-walls indicating the 'World Bank' needs to be opened up to become more of a *conversation*. A non-exhaustive set of four broad strategies can be considered as to how critics engage, or do not, with the Bank in seeking to shape the outcomes of the discursive shifts considered within this work. We might refer to these as jamming, transcending, externalising and partnering. These styles are not necessarily exclusive, and importantly their productive potential is context-dependent. Productive reinforcement is possible within a form of division of labour between more and less *radical* positions and strategies upon changing the Bank (cf. Taylor 2002: 345-6, Chiriboga 1999, Desai & Said 2001). In relation to the interest the Bank has expressed in decentralisation and partnering in recent years, the latter two means of engagement would appear to present greater potentialities for shaping adaptations in the discursive practices of the Knowledge Bank, whilst the former two each play a role in setting the scene within which this engagement takes place.

Jamming

The first option is that of seeking to *jam* Bank operations, clogging the workings of the calculative machine with an abundance of variables or increasing the perceived costs of various developmental endeavours. As previously noted, a number of critical agencies have criticised what they term the Bank's 'mission creep' – its tendency to add on new variables to project calculations, new departments and new projects every time it faces criticism (Caufield 1997, Wilks 2001a, Pincus & Winters 2002a, 2002b, Wade 2001c). In response some have sought to curtail this spread through insisting upon the Bank's adopting a clearly defined core mandate or a more strict interpretation of its Articles of Agreement. This strategy would in effect invert Wade's (2001c) Gulliverian morality tale to view the story from the perspective of the Lilliputians, hoping that campaigns could bear down upon the Bank and jam its organisational functioning with ever more concerns, targets and conditionalities (cf. Bond 2001a). Through a barrage of petitioning from a thousand research and campaign groups, each occupied with niche concerns, it would be hoped that the

Bank's hands could be tied, adding on more programmes, departments and variables so as to weigh the calculative regime down with an abundance of considerations to be defined, measured, translated, accounted and incorporated within the mathematical-economic models that drive so much of its large-scale development work²³².

However hopes of *actually* jamming the organisation seem unrealistic. Whilst it has been noted that it is not efficient at goal-streaming to maximise effectiveness and efficiency, this latter hope would require that it is incapable of even the self-regulation necessary for ensuring its own survival. Critics such as Moses Naím (1994: 5) were noting the organisation's tendency towards operational 'goal congestion' a decade ago, since that time Wolfensohn's presidency has been noted for the acceleration of such trends, and still the Bank goes on. Furthermore, as Bruce Rich (2002: 33-4) has noted, the internal market matrix structure adopted by the Bank under Wolfensohn's Renewal (wherein sector staff have to negotiate work and sell their services to country departments) increases the pressure to work to a managerial consensus as a matter of ensuring job security. Staff who are hired and produce favourable assessment reports that aid the progression of a proposed loan could tend to be re-hired more than those who pay critical attention to the details and problems with any proposed project. Within such a structure it could be expected that assessment programmes inserted into the loan machinery would be smoothed out so as to become paperwork formalities more than substantive calculative issues. Alternatively jamming could be aimed at raising the perceived organisational costs of continuing activities without being seen to try and negotiate seriously with its critics and their concerns; as when the International Rivers Network (2000) maintains that the reason for the Bank's reduced funding for dam projects since the mid-1990s is due to the strength of opposition it faced from affected peoples and 'grassroots activists and international groups' in two landmark cases in India and Nepal. The continual presence of new claims could raise the perceived cost of self-absorbed economic functioning as new calculative procedures are taken on, however nominally; and

²³² Groups such as the Coalition for World Bank Reform, an association of 27 US-based civil society organisations, could be considered as being engaged at this level, however unintentionally. The Coalition's (2002) *Responsible Reform of the World Bank* document consists of seventeen chapters each authored by a different organisation, producing a roll call of reforms oriented around organisational speciality concerns (debt relief, forest protection, pesticides, gender, HIV and so forth).

increase the appeal of less technocratic and more effectively partnered or outsourced activities.

Transcending

The second option is that of seeking to *transcend* the Bank through producing viable independent alternatives to various proposed and actual projects; marking off the Bank's operational terrain and so delimiting perceptions of the legitimate scope of its work. Pursuing this approach limits any productive interaction through which groups might attempt to *directly* influence the Bank, but it is hoped that non-engagement will illustrate that the Bank's efforts are superfluous to the area of development in which it is trying to intervene (as was observed with the establishment of the Choike and Africa Pulse web-portals in response to the Bank's Development Gateway in the previous chapter). Non-engagement in this fashion can occur as something of a last-ditch attempt to throw sand in the wheels of a project-network's functioning, once it becomes apparent that any further participation by critical groups will achieve little in terms of project redirection, and may simply attract attention to the Bank's work from the wider development community. When such strategic non-engagement is successful then it can potentially achieve this end of rethinking the Bank's areas of involvement, but the danger is that through its extensive list of affiliations and greater funding capacity the endeavours of the Bank will always be more widely publicised and more glossily presented – and hence perhaps more highly regarded – than smaller independent ventures.

In this way jamming and transcending are both forms of non-engagement that are strategically useful when it is felt that all other options have failed, but the struggle of ideas at this point devolves into a struggle of financial and political muscle. Anything but a very tightly co-ordinated and massive grouping of civil society actors and perhaps governmental partners seeking to jam initiatives or present alternatives, could expect to be sidelined and coloured by a moral discourse which de-legitimises their standpoint in the eyes of the wider community. Furthermore, taking a resolutely oppositional stance immediately restricts potential partnerings, undermining the chances of productive interaction with all but a very few internal Bank critics. Transcendence is more likely to be a felt need and a viable possibility with relation to some aspects of the Knowledge Bank agenda, such as encouraging knowledge

sharing through providing assistive structures for the use of ICTs. As was noted in relation to the Development Gateway (and to some extent also the Global Development Network), the Bank entered late into a field where its activities could threaten to squeeze out already-existent independent ventures. Supporting and demonstrating the strength of these independent alternatives could encourage the reconsideration of how the Bank disperses its funding. However such strategic disengagement would need to occur on a mass scale in order to detract from the legitimacy of Bank projects in the eyes of any other than the community of critics pursuing these alternatives. If enough other actor-networks were convinced of a Bank project's potentiality and signed up as partners then it could continue, marred by the dissent surrounding it but backed by the financial and organisational strength of the Bank. In the process such Bank project-networks can engage in reproducing the development community upon the basis of which they can be referred to as community-based initiatives.

Externalising

A third and much more ambitious goal is that of *externalisation*, seeking to draw the organisation out from its Washington hub to make it more effectively a *World Bank*, fostering its support for more autonomous and localised development programmes. The organisation could achieve this by restricting core Bank activities to a well-monitored and regulated minimum, and emphasising its funding, coordinative and assistance roles for endeavours undertaken by external groups. As has been noted, the Bank's decentralisation discourse is weak in practise, but these practises might be strengthened were continual pressure to be successfully applied for the Bank to locate more staff in their country of operations, employing more staff from that country and allowing each unit more operational autonomy. This could produce spaces wherein local voices become more prominent. Pressure then applied by an agglomeration of country civil society groups could hopefully bear greater influence over a country office than over the distant Washington complex. We might in this way imagine Robert Wade's (2002b) ship and tugboats analogy (which, it was noted, he considers a problem for the Bank) as a potential solution for actor-networks working across the Bank and civil society engaged in discursive practices of locally-driven *developments*. The tugboats might pull at the Bank to see a collection of smaller project-network initiatives emerge from within the hull as it breaks, each more locally-

oriented in its operations (and therefore its audience, clientele, and staffing), perhaps coordinated through a minimal central satellite.

Externalisation constitutes a desired horizon more than a short-run objective however – a culture shift within the Bank would be necessary before externalisation could occur on any significant and effective level. Problems as noted in Chapter Six would tend to recur; where external partners are given a controlling role over projects, the partners will tend to be very carefully selected for their sharing the same discursive frame of reference and economic preoccupations as the Bank. The limits upon exclusively pursuing externalisation therefore relate to the institutional context within which immediate and outright abolition of the Bank also becomes an unattractive prospect; externalising all Bank projects within an unchanged institutional frame would hold the greatest prospect of changing little as the same concentrations of political and economic power and voice represented by the Bank were reproduced in new forms. Yet externalisation could also fit quite well with an understanding of the Bank in an advanced stage of its development into a Knowledge Management and Networking Bank, becoming increasingly loosely decentred but still performing knowledge-sharing duties that enable a *variety* of development discourses (rather than the one dominant neoliberal economic model) to engage in worldwide conversations upon development.

Partnering

The fourth and final option of *partnering* is an increasingly common reality amongst organisations engaging critically with the Bank and trying to look beyond the commonly accepted Bank/non-Bank, inside/outside boundaries. The approach accepts that the Bank is a complex multi-headed beast that needs to be engaged with in seeking to change both the organisation and its institutional terrain, and realises that diversity within the Bank is central to building pressure for change, because critical commentaries and discursive practices counter to those which tend to hegemonise the organisation are engaged from both outside and inside. Opposing the dominant development discourse practised by the Bank and its major government contributors, involves using the same discursive tools as recently adopted by the Bank (effective knowledge sharing and use of ICTs to communicate strategies, resources and requirements), in producing informed, dispersed and loosely-

coordinated associations of Bank and non-Bank actors (or what we might term *trans-Bank* networks of resistance). To toy with Nikolas Rose's (1996: 56-7) notion of governance at a distance we might consider this deployment of agency through ICTs as a form of *resistance at a distance*, increasing the scale, coordination and dispersion of resisting activities through global information networking. Much in the vein of those who petition the Bank to apply the discourse of 'good governance' that it promotes as best practice for developing countries to itself, in terms of becoming more transparent and accountable (World Bank 1998f, Fidler 2001, Wade 2002b, Kapur 2002, IFIAC 2000, UNDP 2002), the Bank might be pushed to apply more consistently and thoroughly upon itself the discourse of decentralisation and partnership that it trumpets within its renewal. The decentralising ethos might be used and pushed to its logical extreme, and although *externalisation* could remain a desired end-point, pursuing partnerships could incorporate a number of more evident and immediate goals but no *determinate* end-goal (working on the presumption that an abundance of other influential factors will ensure that outcomes remain indeterminate). Radical externalisation *could* be desirable, but multiple more and less (temporarily) satisfactory alternative outcomes are also possible.

This is in effect a gradualist mode of engagement upon the same plane as Externalisation, but setting more restricted goals and conceived as a means of working alongside all those within the Bank who are also pushing for change. The argument is that there are potentialities worth exploring in using the Bank's discourse upon itself, focussing strategically upon decentralising project-networks and procedures of governance out to the countries in which they are to be implemented, and encouraging more deliberative and collaborative processes of problem-definition and agenda-setting. Changes at the Bank may often be small in either intention or effect, due to pressures from donor country governments and other voting members, corporate partners, and the capital markets upon which it places its bonds; the limits of the intellectual framework with which it regards the world it occupies; and the difficulty of changing an institutional culture from the top-down or from the outside. Yet the organisation and its partners are too diverse in their thinking and operations to be dismissed as being without the capacity for change, even if such diversity is frequently pushed to the margins of the dominant organisational narrative. To adapt a notion that André Gorz (1989: 8) puts forward in his *Critique of Economic Reason*,

those who insist upon the Bank's monolithic presence as an organisation devoted entirely to extracting profit from poorer countries, remain somewhat prisoners of their utopia, unable to consider the 'potential for liberation offered by the changes happening now'. As we have seen through the previous three chapters, shifts in thinking and operations are continually occurring at the Bank, with the growing strength of presence of discourses on partnership, ownership, decentralisation and knowledge amongst the more recent.

Building Alternative Knowledge Banks for New 'New' Economies

The agenda within this latter strategy might be wrapped up in the manner discussed in Chapter Six through two interlinked strategies of encouraging engagement with Externally-Operated Project-networks (EOPs), and fostering more effective partnerships within those that retain certain core operations or staffing requirements at the Bank. That is, firstly, encouraging a restriction of direct Bank involvement in endeavours that can be carried out by more local organisations to a form of financial and assistance-oriented engagement, allowing external partners to define their own agendas. The Bank's expertise and funding could be used in organising forums to identify problems in need of addressing, and if efforts were not already underway then it could advertise available funding for such. In the case of the Gateway it could for instance be argued that OneWorld and others were already involved in many of the endeavours the Gateway was designed for, and others such as the co-ordinators of Choike and Africa Pulse were, *post facto*, enthusiastic to develop and maintain regionally-devoted alternatives to which the Bank could have contributed funding.

Secondly, pressure could be applied in seeking to turn Bank-Operated Project-networks (BOPs) into their Multiple Operator counterparts (MOPs), petitioning to create independent governing bodies of partners for such MOPs in pulling project-networks away from the Bank's at times domineering control to produce Fostered Project-networks (FoPs), and then pushing to make these FoPs more effectively fostered and independent. So overall this could be coined as a strategy of dispersal pushing BOPs into MOPs and MOPs into FoPs, pulling FoPs further away from the Bank and encouraging engagement with EOPs. This would involve greater roles for all who partner with the Bank, and so through such a process of decentralisation the

boundaries distinguishing Bank and non-Bank would become increasingly blurred – as was noted has been occurring through the Bank's own discursive practices in Chapter Six – but in this instance importantly with the volition of both the Bank and an observing critical community.

The more the boundaries of the Bank were blurred and its idea-producing core diffracted in this way, the more space would be produced to open the organisation up to a conversation between various trans-Bank actor-networks. Such conversation would include questions upon the nature and desirability of, and paths that can be pursued towards, different 'developments', as well as the Bank's role within the field and that of other interested parties currently subsumed under the CSO bracket. Opening up the Bank to conversation would be an effective means of opening up a parallel discourse upon the nature of CSOs and NGOs; questions of who speaks for whom and who is *accountable* to whom. Discursive involvement with the Bank's under-defined categories of NGOs and CSOs is necessary to shape the direction of the Bank's partnerships with externals, ensuring that this 'opening up' does not merely consolidate wider communities of consensus around the Bank's discursive practice, but rather opens it up to critical engagement. At the same time, such involvement could usefully motivate questions upon the nature of NGO networking discourse, and the distribution of voice between locally-based organisations of the developmentally-affected in the South, and international NGOs based in the North (cf. Nelson 1996, Chiriboga 1999, Atkinson 2000).

Such critical actor-networks can productively engage in dialogue with the Bank in negotiating programmes of change, remaining reflexively critical of changes affected and their failings, on the understanding that it will probably never change so radically as to satisfy the demands of all (for many groups this would involve its dissolution). The same problems could potentially occur as were noted with the end-goal strategy of externalisation; the tendency for the Bank to select partners who share in its perspective and methodology and so effect a process of repetition, with the only real difference being the lack of the Bank's name headlining the projects that were created. Yet it is at this point that the need to refuse the dichotomy between *moderate* and *radical* critics becomes most apparent, and hence the function of thinking of the four outlined strategies as something of a division of labour. Consistent pressure could be applied through cost-raising *jamming* activities and public-relations

damaging examples of development actor-networks seeking to *transcend* the need or the Bank's involvement. Such activities would set the scene for increasing the role of partners and frequently re-negotiating a balance being between initiatives being too internally and too externally coordinated, such that agendas that were significantly (if not greatly) different to those dominant within the Bank could benefit from its resources, expertise and networking abilities. The aim of this process of engagement would be directed at opening up and developing particular heterotopic spaces within the Bank²³³; enabling it to speak more clearly and distinctly with more than one voice, and so altering the conditions of existence of its 'political, economic, institutional regime of the production of truth' (Foucault 1984a: 74). This could, it would be hoped, encourage the Bank to become more reflexive to local concerns, producing shifts in its prioritisation of concerns and formulation of agendas, and lessening the ease with which the narrow economic mindset that has traditionally dominated the organisation could be reproduced unimpeded.

Conclusion

In this and previous chapters we have seen that the Knowledge Bank is best considered as a new scene in the same act of the development drama, with the scenery effectively remaining in place whilst little changes in the main plot and the interaction of the key players. The state of renewal at the Bank has been considered as a stilted process containing opportunities, but hampered by a variety of restricting factors (members' interests, staffing, sources of capital) that perpetuate the dominance of a narrowly-defined economic discourse within the organisation. The Bank's characterisation of its critics and potential partners was viewed as another example of this stilted reform; what could be viewed in one sense as an attempt to open up to critical perspectives upon itself and its vision of development was seen as producing increasingly inclusive and ambiguous terminology that tended to elide the differences between various voices and whom they represent. This in turn lent to the production of a simplistic and morally-coloured discourse (upon the moderate-reformer and radical-abolitionist actor-positions) that opened up a space within which the Bank could prescribe who it should and should *not* engage with in its discourse of

²³³ I understand heterotopia here as 'those singular spaces to be found in some given social spaces whose functions are different or even the opposite of others' (Foucault 1984c: 252).

self-reform. The division of reformers and abolishers – used by both the Bank and a number of Bank-critical actor-networks – was questioned and argued to be an unproductive and unnecessary distraction; it was then instead suggested that a broad division of labour could be effected between an array of critical actor-networks.

However it has also been argued in this chapter that such changes in the Bank's *scripted* role (partnership, ownership, networking) indicate opportunities for altering aspects within the organisation's *performance* of development, even if (or perhaps because) the organisation is not currently well-rehearsed in their practise. In response it has been argued that the opportunities that exist need to be pursued in encouraging the organisation to practise more consistently and thoroughly its own discourse of renewal, partnership and decentralisation. Several strategies of non/engagement have thus been considered, and tentative critical engagement with the Bank's project-networks has been argued to present possibilities for enabling their more independent development as something other than merely *extensions* of the Bank. Two strategies of non-engagement have meanwhile been argued to have roles to play in setting the scene within which the Bank considers the costs and benefits it faces in engaging more and less effective partnerships and modes of decentralisation. Through partnership initiatives the hope would be that processes of decentralisation might be taken out to the degree where the boundaries delineating Bank and non-Bank activities could be blurred, morphing the organisation towards a position where it acts in an assistance role to externally-directed projects with lesser Bank control. The hope would be that as its operations became more territorially and organisationally *diffused*, this might work to diffract the central hub around which its ideas-producing machinery operates, and in turn to *defuse* the towering political-economic might with which it currently dominates the development landscape.

Conclusion

This thesis has been concerned with discursive practices surrounding the production of a 'new' economy, associated 'new' forms of development and governance, and a 'new' World Bank which has been seeking to reposition itself in relation to these concerns. The work has approached this series of changes as *relatively* new variations upon a much *older* series of struggles over sources and understandings of property and wealth, the means by which they are produced, and the means by which claims upon them are made. The focus within this approach has been upon the tendency towards *repetition* within the discursive practices of dominant sets of interests, but also considering how small opportunities for producing *differences* can often emerge from within such moments of *re-production*. Although patterns of recurrence predominate, the continual presence of small adaptations mean that within each moment new and different spaces can potentially be opened up.

In Part One we saw how a 'new economy' and a 'new society' have been conceived, and are now being negotiated and performed, through the discursive practices of various actor-networks. The conceptual and terminological soup that discussions over this new economy and society represent were shown to face a number of problems in terms of conceptualisation and measurement. Stronger and weaker links were firstly agreed to exist between various interesting technological developments and changes in procedures of production, but the analytic endeavour of bringing these changes together as signifying a newly emergent *economy* was argued to be questionable. The observed changes were argued to not necessarily cohere in the attributed manner (causal relationships were asserted somewhat too casually), and nor did they necessarily represent a *rupture* with any 'old' economy (the significance of various observed changes was often overstated out of context). The knowledge society was secondly argued to be even more problematic as an analytical tool than the knowledge economy, in terms of its generality and ambiguity.

Nonetheless, critical understandings of the 'knowledge' economy and society were agreed to be interesting and useful insofar as the notions occupy important positions within contemporary developmental and governmental discursive practices. The knowledge society was argued to function principally as a rhetorical framing device

within which fears, hopes, and programmes of action with regards to the knowledge *economy* could be given greater emphasis, through encouraging the impression that we speak of a new *era* and not just a new economic phase. Aspects of the knowledge economy, it was argued, are becoming reified through governmental and developmental discursive practices, as connections between technological and social changes are asserted, and policy changes are implemented, which in turn accelerate processes of change in labour organisation, education and technological development.

A number of hopes and fears concerning the knowledge economy were observed to be common threads of preoccupation running through much governmental and developmental discourse. These concerns centred around the prospects of countries advancing to, maintaining or losing their position at the forefront of global economic competitiveness; leapfrogging whole stages of economic development or else becoming stuck on the losing end of a new international division of knowledge labour. The knowledge economy discourse of Northern governmental institutions was argued to be dominated by the concern to extend contemporary capital regulation norms to newly fictionalised capital forms, standardising procedures of economic and social governance globally in extending the provenance of neoliberal discursive practices. Such practices would not hold out good prospects for producing greater social and economic equality, greater difference over repetition; but at the same time it was noted that spaces exist for alternative visions within the reproduction of the hegemonically predominant discursive form, and that the eventual outcomes of interaction between various understandings of knowledge's social and economic roles remain underdetermined.

Origins and understandings of the concept of development and its means and goals were finally also discussed, and it was concluded that a complex and shifting assemblage of multiple discursive practices surround the notion. The macro-practice of government-level development was argued to be dominated by concerns of modernisation, integration and economic growth. The discursive practice of such grand-scale development as a whole, and that of the World Bank more specifically, were seen to have faced crises induced by the failure of projected hopes. As a consequence of this failure, the discursive practises of both development and the Bank were noted to have become preoccupied with self-reform, the latest

adjustments being to incorporate knowledge economy concerns such as bridging various divides, intellectual property rights, and universal basic education.

Part Two then proceeded to analyse this discourse of self-reform at the World Bank in greater detail. The Bank was considered as a complex organisation dominated by a series of political, financial and cultural constitutive elements (such as the interests of its major Northern government members, its dependence upon capital markets, and its drawing staff predominantly from the economics departments of US and UK universities). However the organisation's complexity was argued to mean that these factors do not overdetermine its every move. This great story-teller of our age is still able to spin a tale of its own, however heavily-influenced it may be by these elements around and within it. The Wolfensohn Project of Renewal and its Knowledge Bank project have been the latest extended chapter in this story of development and reform, an attempt that in part deflects criticism by presenting a friendly-faced Bank concerned only to produce smiles on the faces of the children affected by its work. Two dominant understandings of the Knowledge Bank were noted as representing voices which speak *within*, if not always *for*, the organisation; the Knowledge for Development Bank (K4DB) and the Knowledge Management and Networking Bank (KMNB).

The knowledge economy and development discursive practices of the Bank's major government members were noted to prevail within the K4DB (concerns to extend the dominant contemporary mode of capital regulation to information and knowledge, by opening economies up and extending and systematising Intellectual Property Rights legislation). Yet at the same time, discourses were also seen as existing within the organisation upon working with *certain kinds* of knowledge as public goods, and upon establishing legislation to protect indigenous knowledge. These ambiguities within the Knowledge Bank agenda were argued to typify the complexities of the Bank as a whole. In looking at the KMNB, the Knowledge Bank was argued to be not so much a programme as a *scenario* of renewal, a series of improvisations upon a theme, attempting to raise awareness of the organisation's perceived strengths and redefine a new and more audience-pleasing ethos, whilst dressing older practices in new colours. The project was in this way considered as a re-branding and mainstreaming of practices already ongoing within the Bank before the new President's arrival.

The Bank's adoption of network-thinking gives the overall impression that some new lines have been written into its script but that it is not currently well-practised in how to perform the new role. As a result of an organisational conservatism built in through the restricting factors mentioned, concerning its major sources of funding and staffing, and procedures of governance, there is still too strong a tendency towards behaving as though the organisation should speak with one voice upon one *valid* form of development. As such the *practise* of the discourse of partnership has tended towards a nominal dispersal of agency; selecting partners who share the hegemonic perspective upon development and international economics expressed by the dominant voice of the Bank; and minimising the *role* of many other partners whilst advertising its more decentred approach, producing dispersal with managed control (as was noted in the Development Gateway).

Within the politics of networks surrounding the Bank's renewal as a Knowledge Management and Networking Bank therefore lies the possibility of its *reproducing* the development community to whom it appeals in its calls to network through its involvement in knowledge management training, and educational endeavours. One possible end-result is the Bank's extending its normalising influences upon development discourse and responsabilising a variety of developmental and governmental actors to govern themselves by (in effect, World Bank) numbers. Such outcomes would consolidate the Bank's position and ability to govern at a distance from within an assemblage of independent actor-networks, extending the hegemonic conditions under which the power of its truths operate. The same problems of discursive influence have been argued to hold in the Bank's attempts to define who it should and should *not* listen to and engage with, positing caricatured actor-positions of legitimate and illegitimate critics within its discourse (in terms of the end-goals and strategies they adopt).

Yet these new elements within the Bank's discourse are still relatively complex, open and underdetermined, and can also be seen as opening up opportunities for taking the organisation in new directions through critical engagement. In the manner mentioned towards the end of Chapter Five, the knowledge economy and the notion of the Knowledge Bank can be viewed as several conversations within the Bank itself, each with its own grammar and priorities (cf. Bebbington et al., forthcoming, Leiteritz 2002). The most clearly heard voice of narrowly-conceived economic discourse may

frame knowledge as a form of capital and be concerned with knowledge-maximising policies for promoting economic growth. Business models of organisational knowledge management and networking may recur in documentation upon improving the Bank's performance. Yet other social scientists and broader-minded economists within the Bank are at the same time more concerned with the socio-cultural shifts involved in thinking about a 'knowledge' economy, asking questions about the position of tacit and traditional knowledges and the value and potential losses in development terms stemming from translation and standardisation procedures.

An optimistic perspective upon this situation would thus be that as knowledge economy discourse has entered the Bank an economic perspective may have dominated, due to the Bank's culture and structure. Yet the attention that the discourse has drawn could now raise awareness of, and provide opportunities to, other perspectives concerned to question the organisation's dominant mode of operations. Interesting vulnerabilities are implied in the Bank's speaking of ownership and partnership and thinking of itself in network terms – the desire and perhaps *need* to forge alliances with a wider assemblage of its critical actor-networks. These vulnerabilities suggest opportunities to use the Bank's discourse upon itself, demanding its more consistent and thorough application in encouraging greater practises of dispersal. This could in turn encourage a rethinking of how the organisation is constituted, how it acts in the development field and how it relates to other development actors; acknowledging the dispersed nature of agency and voice within its operations and so opening up its discursive terrain. Quiet voices of progress are present within the discursive changes at the Bank, which can productively be worked with and thereby strengthened, in opening it up to conversations running across its organisational boundaries. The most productive form of ongoing pressure that we see today is based around such an approach, establishing connections across boundary-lines delineating 'the Bank', producing spaces wherein a plurality of voices can be heard, and in this way encouraging the organisation to at least *consider* alternative approaches to and conceptions of development.

As we have seen, the Bank still tends to talk mainly with its close friends – those who concur in its view of the world and what needs to be done in and to it – and to prefer to be the loudest voice in the telling of development stories, such that its views come to predominate whenever it chooses to speak. What is needed now is to make the

grand storyteller realise how it can productively speak with different voices in the telling of *different* stories, how it *can* listen to the stories of those other than its closest friends, and how it could learn to appreciate the strange beauty that sometimes emerges from acts of *group* storytelling. As a long-term aspirational agenda we might hope that, using its own words and encouraging it to be true to them, it can be opened up to alternative approaches to knowledge and ways of knowing, and development itself and ways of being. To return to the notion of development as a drama, the 'audience' of civil society critics have a central role in expressing approval and disapproval and calling for change, as well as performing alongside those within the Bank also already exploring alternative perspectives. With some good prompting and on-stage improvisation from this audience, then we might hope that the Bank can be heckled, restrained and encouraged to the point where it presents a more convincing performance as a facilitator of a *variety* of development efforts, more than merely an underwriting *bank* for a series of grand-scale projects in 'Development'. This could move the performance of development forwards towards something bearing the significance of a new act, if not to even more radically change the *nature* of the performance. Through engagement with the Bank, the grand-scale governmental-economic development drama can be tested to see if it can become a more open and improvised piece with minimal scripting, adaptable to the localities wherein it is performed and allowing greater audience participation.

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